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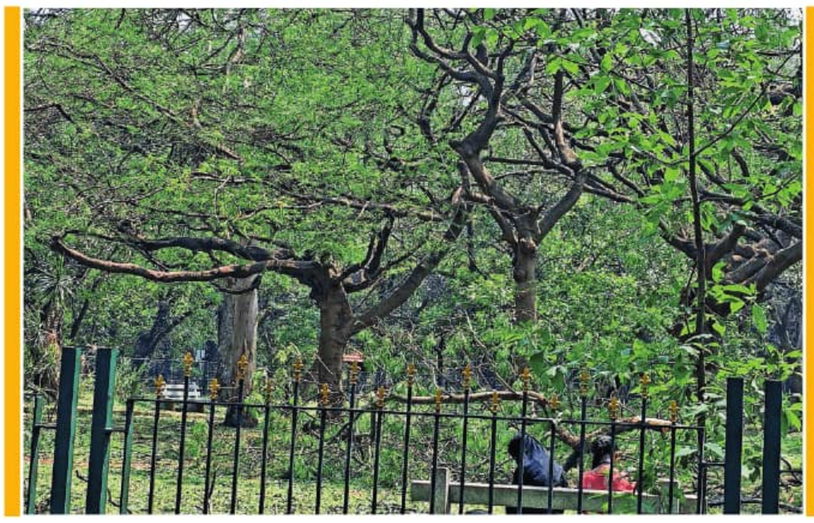
Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 34 | Min 22 | Humidity 52% Partly sunny Sensex 76,913 | Nifty 23,997 | Gold 1,51,568 | Silver 2,47,500 | Dollar 94.84 | Euro 111.34 | GBP 129.02



THINGS FALL APART

Hailstorm also left city's wildlife exposed and vulnerable, struggling to cope with scale of destruction to habitats

PAGE 3

CONCRETE JUNGLE

Newly-constructed railway underpass is a sight to see (or not), littered with culvert boxes, gathering muck

PAGE 4

5.63 lakh blank calls so far to 112 emergency helpline — police treat each blank call and SOS over trivial issues with importance they deserve, but they are at end of their rope with trouble-makers, who dial in just to abuse women operators

CALL OF THE CUCKOOS

3,532 crank calls in 3 months this year is sharp spike from 2025

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FILE PHOTO

Late one night, a police official at the command centre received a call on the 112 emergency helpline. On the other end, was a harried citizen. And his emergency? A bunch of stray dogs were barking outside his apartment complex, disturbing his sleep.

Sampigehalli Police arrived at the spot in no time and managed to disperse the stray dogs gathered outside the apartment gates. "We cannot ignore any call. Even if the issue sounds trivial, it can sometimes escalate into a quarrel or even murder," a police official told Bangalore Mirror.

The 112 emergency helpline, set up to respond to distress calls, is grappling with a sharp rise in misuse, with blank and crank calls far outnumbering genuine emergencies. In the first three months of 2026, officials handled around 1.9 lakh genuine calls, but recorded a staggering 5.63 lakh blank calls, many dialled accidentally. During the same period, 3,532 crank calls were reported averaging over 1,100 a month nearly matching the 3,728 cases recorded in the whole of 2024.

The helpline serves as a single point of contact for reporting accidents, crimes, medical emergencies, domestic violence, senior citizen distress, road rage, noise pollution, suicide attempts and drug abuse. But over the past few months, a number of non-serious callers are dialling in.

> **"Blank calls are those where the caller does not speak or respond to the operator. Many such calls are triggered accidentally due to the government-mandated emergency calling feature on mobile phones**
>
> —Kshama Mishra, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Command Centre)

Kshama Mishra, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Command Centre), who oversees the emergency helpline operations at the Bengaluru Police Command Centre, explained that blank calls are those where the caller does not speak or respond to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 >>

Census work hits a glitch

Enumerators struggle as app doesn't work on older devices, workload is uneven and kits are yet to arrive

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As the Census exercise gathers pace across Karnataka, enumerators on the ground are grappling with multiple challenges ranging from incompatible mobile applications to uneven workload distribution and delays in receiving essential kits. With the digital census officially commenced on April 16, the government has introduced a dedicated mobile application for uploading data. However, the app does not support older Android devices, leaving several enumerators in a difficult position.

Many field staffers, especially those using older mobile phones, are now forced to purchase new devices costing at least 15,000 to continue their work. This comes as a significant burden considering that the remuneration for census duties is around 1,000. The application reportedly requires newer-generation smartphones with at least 4GB RAM, making it inaccessible for those using outdated models. Some enumerators said they have had no choice but to invest in new phones, while others are depending on family members' devices to upload data.

Apart from technical issues, concerns have also been raised about unscientific mapping and poor planning in certain

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Colourful memories

Magical World, an exhibition featuring a vibrant collection of artworks by Badrunissa Irfan, brings alive the magic of childhood and the warmth of simple moments through playful, hand-painted characters and scenes. **Where: Sublime Gallery, UB City; When: Until May 30**

02 Feel the beat

Rudraksha Live Entertainment Pvt Ltd presents Jazbaa, a concert featuring Vishal and Rekha Bhardwaj — a powerhouse duo in Indian music and cinema, known for their deeply moving collaborations and individual brilliance. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity; When: May 30, 7 pm**

03 Turning the page anew

Atta Galatta is presenting Healing Wounds in Parental Relationships, an experiential workshop designed to help participants begin the process of recovering their sense of self, while exploring ways to cultivate contentment. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: May 3, 10.30 am**

04 Creative escape

Atta Galatta is presenting a hands-on linocut printing workshop by The Lino Table. The beginner-friendly session invites participants to slow down, carve, ink and print their own artwork from scratch. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: May 2, 6 pm**

05 Artistic blend

Created by acclaimed director and composer Kevin Oliver and presented in support of the Kempegowda International Airport Foundation (KIAF), Odyssey of Love is a contemporary pop opera blending music, fashion and storytelling into a visually rich and immersive spectacle. **Where: Good Shepherd Auditorium, Shanthala Nagar; When: May 7**

New app repository to guide digital mental health choices

NIMHANS launches comprehensive, filter-based searchable catalogue designed to provide users curated and quality-assessed information on mental health apps available in India

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As mental health concerns rise and more Indians turn to smartphone apps for support, choosing a trustworthy mental health app has become increasingly difficult amid the flood of digital options. To bridge this gap, the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) has launched a pilot Mental Health App Repository, an initiative aimed at helping users make informed choices by offering a structured, quality-screened catalogue of mental health applications available to Indian users.

From managing anxiety to tracking mood changes and learning coping strategies, mental health apps offer promises of accessible and affordable basic support at one's fingertips. However, with thousands of such apps available, that vary widely in content, features, quality, safety, and suitability, it becomes extremely challenging for users to shortlist apps that may suit their needs and preferences.

Building on a large-scale study of mental health apps available to Indian users, the Centre for Advanced Research in Digital Interventions for Mental Healthcare, supported by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has developed a pilot Mobile App Repository to help users navigate the complex digital mental health landscape.

Users can explore mental health apps by platform, audience, focus, approach and cost using mobile repository

Repository is not meant to function as recommendation list or endorsement of effectiveness, but rather as informational resource created to support users in making informed choices, says scientist at NIMHANS-ICMR Centre for Advanced Research

The repository stems from one of India's earliest large-scale efforts to systematically assess mental health apps. Researchers screened more than 5,800 apps using search terms such as "depression," "anxiety," and "cognitive behavioral therapy," before shortlisting 350 for detailed evaluation through standardised assessment tools. While many apps performed well in design and usability, offering features like self-assessments, mood tracking, psychoeducation, and therapeutic exercises, however, the study also flagged concerns including inconsistent content quality, poor transparency around sensitive user data, limited involvement of mental health professionals in app development, and uneven scientific evidence backing many platforms. These shortcomings, researchers say, make it harder for users to identify suitable mental health apps.

In response to these observations, the NIMHANS research team has piloted a Mobile App Repository, a structured, filter-based searchable catalogue of mental health applications that were evaluated in the study. The repository allows users to explore mental health apps based on their availability on Android or Apple platform, target audience, mental health concerns, therapeutic approaches, primary focus, key strategies, and cost.

Abhishek Karishiddimath, scientist at NIMHANS-ICMR Centre for Advanced Research, noted, "From the 350 reviewed apps, only those meeting a minimum quality threshold based on the internationally recognised Mobile Application Rating Scale (MARS) have been included. Most importantly, the repository is not a recommendation list or a list claiming effectiveness or otherwise of the applications listed. It is designed as an informational resource, supporting users to make informed choices."

Through the repository, researchers aim to promote transparency by presenting app features and limitations in a user-friendly format, enabling people to make informed choices, while emphasising that such apps are not a replacement for professional mental healthcare.

Dr Seema Mehrotra, Professor of Clinical Psychology & Officer In-charge NIMHANS-ICMR Centre for Advanced Research, said, "The digital mental health space is evolving rapidly, with new apps emerging and existing ones frequently changing. Recognising this, the NIMHANS-ICMR Centre for Advanced Research plans to update the repository periodically to ensure it remains current and relevant."

Power connection ownership transfer made easy in B'luru

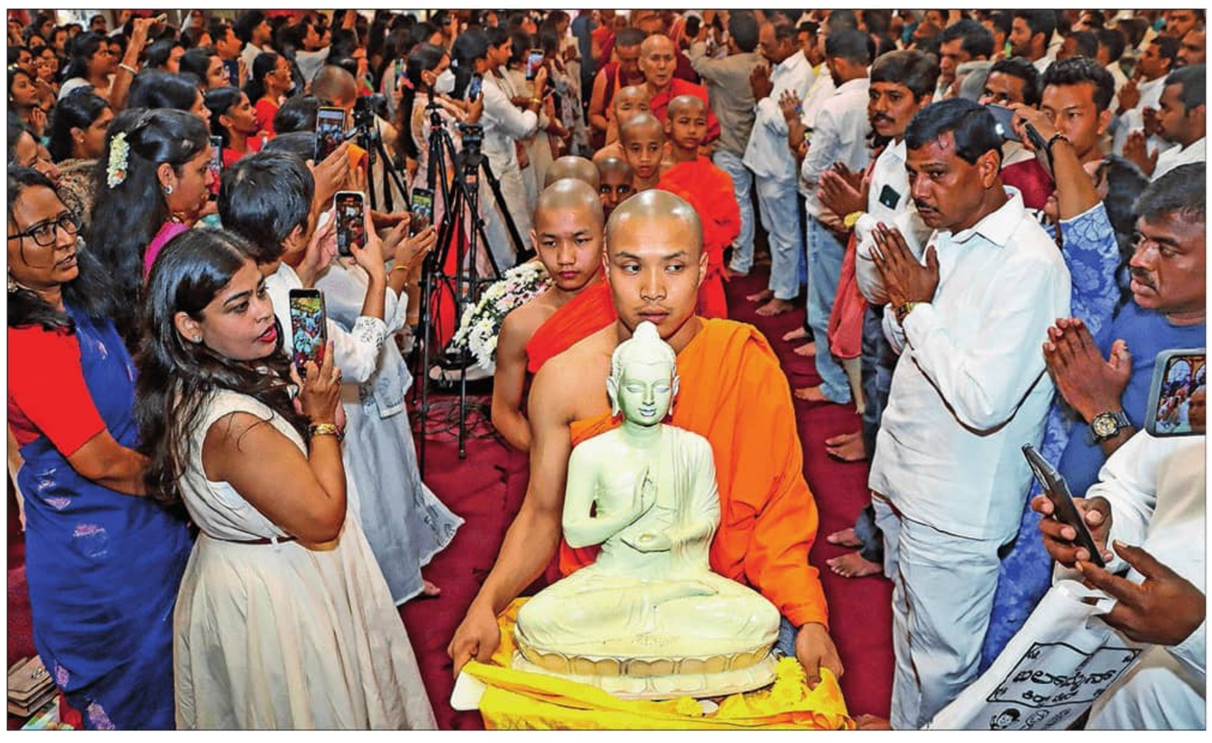
The process of transferring electricity connection ownership in Bengaluru has become quick and hassle-free, thanks to the integration of the BESCOM portal with the GBA database. This move, which builds on the success of the e-Khata initiative, allows automatic verification of property and owner details, enabling users to complete the entire process online in under 10 minutes. With over 5,000 users already benefitting, property owners can now update the name on their electricity connection anytime, marking a significant step forward in India's digital governance push.

An official explained that under the new system, verified details such as property number, customer ID, Aadhaar and mobile number from the e-Khata database are used to seamlessly transfer connections from builders to buyers or from previous owners to new ones.

Earlier, the process involved multiple office visits and often cost over Rs 10,000 through intermediaries. Now, it is completely faceless, transparent and free from manual intervention.

Once an e-Khata is issued, owners receive a link via SMS, where they can log in, verify details through OTP, e-sign documents on digital stamp paper, pay the required fee, and complete the process seamlessly.

The updated name automatically reflects in the next electricity bill, making the service simple, fast and user-friendly. **— BMB**

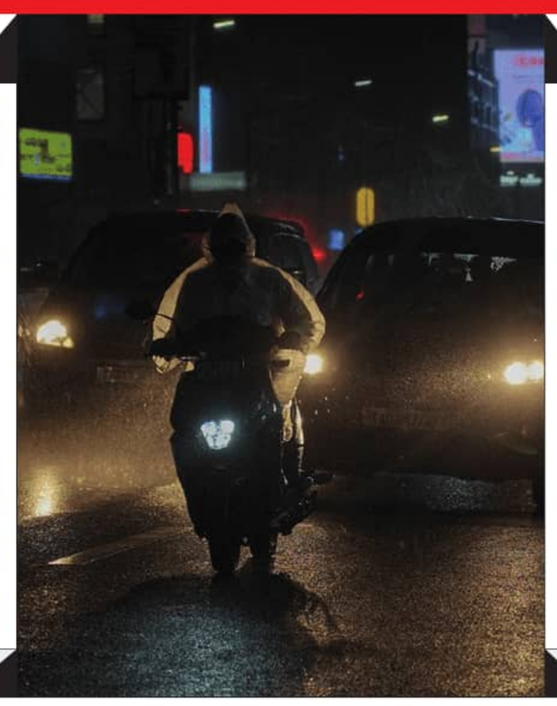


Spiritual reflection

Devotees gathered at Maha Bodhi Society in Bengaluru for prayers and meditation to mark the occasion of Buddha Purnima on Friday

Stormy cityscape

B'luru was gripped by showers yet again, as the city experienced sharp downpour on Friday evening, leaving streets waterlogged and traffic disrupted



KAUSHIK JN

RAINS LEAVE WILDLIFE STRUGGLING

In aftermath of hailstorm and torrent of rain that hit city, rescuers report overwhelming rise in rescue calls involving displaced or injured birds, reptiles and small mammals

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The hailstorm that swept through Bengaluru caused widespread damage to properties, vehicles and trees, while flooding and water entering homes and shops disrupted daily life and brought parts of the city to a standstill. But that is only part of the story, as the city's wildlife was also left exposed and vulnerable, struggling to cope with the scale of destruction to their habitats.

In the 24 hours following the storm, the team at Avian and Reptile Rehabilitation Centre (ARRC) in Banaswadi responded to more than 130 cases reported by the public, the highest number of admissions recorded in a single day. Black kites accounted for the largest share of rescues, likely because of their larger size which makes them easier for people to spot and report. Smaller birds may be equally or even more affected, but are far less likely to be noticed.

Subiksha Venkatesh, Lead Wildlife Rehabilitator at Avian and Reptile Rehabilitation Centre, said that across species, there was a consistent pattern observed: the youngest and the weakest bore the brunt of the storm. "When large, old trees fall, nests come down with them, separating chicks from their parents. Juvenile birds and individuals already coping with minor disabilities struggled to withstand the intensity of the wind and rain, and were found grounded. The timing of the storm compounded the difficulty. Occurring at night, it caught animals at their most disoriented, and with limited ability to navigate, they were more vulnerable to predation by free-ranging cats and dogs, and less likely to be spotted in time," said Venkatesh. For reptiles, the situation unfolded differently. Venkatesh noted that flooded burrows forced snakes out into the open, often into residential spaces, triggering panic among residents. "In one instance, we rescued a rat snake hatchling that had been severely injured after people pelted it with stones," she said.

FILE PHOTO

Kites made up most rescues, likely because their larger size made them easier to spot and report

Distress calls were received from across the city, but the impact was most severe in areas with dense, mature tree cover. The Lalbagh, Cubbon Park, Palace Grounds belt witnessed numerous incidents of fallen branches and habitat disruption, with a disproportionately high number of reports coming from central Bengaluru, including Cubbon Park, MG Road, Lavelle Road, Infantry Road and the areas surrounding Bowring Hospital.

Venkatesh pointed out that although broken branches and fallen trees do result in some injuries, not every animal encountered after heavy rain requires rescue. "Many birds simply need time to dry out and recover from any residual shock before they can take flight again. In several instances, we were able to remotely guide members of the public to assist wildlife without intervention," she said.

However, there are also situations where help is necessary. "A visibly injured, immobile, or unresponsive animal requires immediate attention....For those who feel the need to act, we advise against excessive handling, as stress can cause harm to birds," she said.

Woman alleges being filmed in bathroom

A 23-year-old woman residing in Garudacharpalya has alleged that she was being filmed while bathing at her home around 9.30 am on April 29. She raised concerns that the video might be circulated online. The incident came to light when the woman noticed a suspicious person at the adjacent building taking the video with his mobile. When she called him out, the man fled.

She has filed an FIR in this regard with the Mahadevapura Police Station. The officials are examining the matter and trying to determine how the recording may have been done. Authorities have assured strict action against persons indulging in such illegal activities. — BMB

Heavy weekend traffic causes congestion

The Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway witnessed heavy traffic, with toll plazas buzzing with locals heading for a weekend getaway. The large crowd caused traffic disruptions and resulted in long queues as vehicles moved slowly, leading to increased travel time.

According to a post by Bengaluru City Police, the public is being urged to avoid the NICE Road Junction heading towards Mysuru and is advised to take alternative routes via Kaggalipura and Harohalli Road to avoid congestion. — BMB

Hoysala teams on a roll

A young woman reportedly locked herself inside a room in an attempt to die by suicide on April 27 at her residence in Radha Reddy Layout, Doddakannelli. Her brother, alarmed by her reaction, contacted Namma 112. Hoysala 239 from Bellandur Police Station were alerted and officials reached the spot within 12 minutes. They managed to calm her, after which they compassionately convinced her to open the door. In another case, a young boy who was lost was found and reunited with his family near Channasandra on April 27 by Hoysala 234 team. — BMB

Census official claims abuse during work

A case has been registered against a city resident following allegations of obstruction and verbal abuse faced by a female census official.

Police said complainant Yogesh OG, 58, a census officer with the Bagalagunte Division of Bengaluru North Municipal Corporation, lodged a complaint on April 30, 2026. He reported that census enumerator Rani M had visited a house on Malasandra 7th Cross, T Dasarahalli, around 4 pm as part of official duties. During the visit, a resident identified as Anand, son of Muniyappa, allegedly abused the enumerator with foul language and refused to provide census information.

Police said the accused also obstructed the official from carrying out her duties. Based on the complaint, a case has been registered, and further legal action is being initiated against the accused. — BMB

Thieves break into store, make away with silver worth Rs 1.2 cr

Unidentified miscreants broke into a jewellery shop in North Bengaluru by drilling through a wall and escaped with nearly 70 kg of silver articles worth around Rs 1.2 crore.

The incident occurred at MB Jewellers near Havanur in the Eight Mile area under the jurisdiction of Bagalagunte Police Station on April 28. According to police, the accused gained access from the rear side of the building before drilling a hole through the wall to enter the shop.

After gaining entry, the burglars specifically targeted silver items, likely capitalising on the recent rise in silver prices. Investigators suspect the theft was planned in advance, pointing to the careful manner in which the wall was broken and valuables were removed. The incident came to light around 7 am on April 28, when shop staff opened the premises and noticed signs of forced entry, after which police were alerted.

Police have registered a case and initiated an investigation.

The miscreants also allegedly took away digital recording equipment from a neighbouring shop, an officer said.

Efforts are underway to identify and apprehend those involved in the high-value theft. — BMB

Woman found dead at home, suicide suspected

A 34-year-old woman from Meghalaya was found dead in her rented accommodation in Hebbal on Wednesday evening. Police officials suspect the incident to be a suicide following a strained relationship with her live-in partner.

The deceased has been identified as Kong Agatha Ba Ithianghun Khongwet. According to preliminary information, the incident came to light between 7 pm and 7.30 pm. Police said that, prima facie, the case appears to be a death by suicide. However, officials clarified that the exact cause of death will be confirmed only after the autopsy report is received.

Initial inquiry revealed that the woman had been living with a male friend from Manipur for the past three years.

Meanwhile, the Khasi Students' Union Bengaluru Unit expressed condolences and stated that the deceased hailed from Tangmang village in Pynursla, East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya. The union claimed she was living in a relationship with a man identified as Nawaz Sharif.

A case has been registered for unnatural death at Kodigehalli Police Station. Further investigation is underway. — BMB

Teen killed by speeding private bus in Hennur

A 16-year-old boy was killed after being run over by a speeding private bus while crossing the road near Geddalahalli on Hennur–Bagaluru Main Road on Friday morning.

The deceased, identified as Varun, was a Class 10 student at a private school. According to police, the incident occurred around 11.30 am when Varun had stepped out of his house to buy water for his ailing father. While attempting to cross the road, a private bus allegedly hit him at high speed and ran over his chest. He died on the spot due to the impact. The driver of the bus has been arrested. Further investigation is underway. — BMB

Culvert-astrophe blocks roads, leaves pedestrians stranded daily

Concrete debris paralyses busy Pulakeshinagar crossing, crippling vehicle movement and denying safe passage for walkers near railway subway daily

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Thousands of motorists and pedestrians have been facing significant problems due to the dumping of precast concrete box culverts at a site meant for the construction of a much-needed footpath near the newly constructed railway underpass at Tannery Road Junction.

The South Western Railway (SWR) constructed an underpass to serve as a junction for nearby roads, including Tannery Road, Haines Road, Bore Bank Road, Pottery Road and MM Road, in the Pulakeshinagar Assembly constituency. The newly constructed railway underpass has mitigated traffic-related woes to a great extent, and motorists have expressed gratitude to the SWR for constructing it. However, motorists are finding it difficult to take a left turn onto Pottery Road to enter the underpass and proceed towards MM Road and other areas due to the dumping of precast concrete box culverts, which are said to have been lying there for more than a year.

Over thirty unused structures occupy space, forcing risky navigation, while filthy surroundings and foul odour spark outrage among residents demanding immediate clearance action

"There are more than 30 precast concrete box culverts at the spot, causing considerable inconvenience to motorists. There is no footpath adjacent to the railway compound wall. Pedestrians have no place to walk. There is no footpath at the underpass for their benefit. It is an important traffic junction used by thousands of motorists from Nagawara and other areas to reach the Central Business District (CBD). How do you expect pedestrians to use the underpass to reach the other side of the railway track?" asked Zaffar Sait, a long-time resident of Richards Town.

Expressing a similar opinion, students Srushti R and TN Yogajay said the underpass looks dirty and needs to be cleaned. "No footpath has been constructed for pedestrians who want to use the underpass to reach the other side of the railway track," they said.

The correspondent who visited the spot found that the precast concrete box culverts were filled with dirty water and all types of garbage. The place where they are dumped is being used as an open urinal, and one has to cover their nose to protect against the bad smell emanating from stagnant water and rotting garbage. "I am not happy with the garbage and unhygienic conditions here. I expected the railway underpass and its surroundings to be neat and clean, but it is quite disgusting to see such nuisances," said Sunidhi Rao, a student.

Meanwhile, the Pulakeshinagar Executive Engineer said that the Bengaluru North City Corporation has nothing to do with the abandoned precast concrete box culverts. "The South Western Railway authorities constructed a drain along the railway track. The contractor used such box culverts for the construction of the drain. It is the responsibility of the contractor to remove the remaining precast concrete box culverts," the Executive Engineer said. However, a South Western Railway Public Relations Officer said that he has informed the engineer concerned to address the issue. "The problem will be resolved as early as possible," the PRO said.

Will motorists get much-needed relief from the precast concrete box culverts that have not only become a nuisance but have also caused problems for more than a year? Hapless motorists and pedestrians will have to wait and watch.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that my client is willing to purchase the landed property bearing **Sy.No.107/2 measuring 1 Acre 01 guntas,** situated at Bekuppe village, Kasaba hobli, Kanakapura taluk, Bangalore South District, from the present owner namely **Smt.Bhaghyalakshmi.B w/o Ramesh.H.M.,** who purchased the property under a registered sale deed dt.25-7-2025 which is bearing document No.KNK-1-06342/2025-26. Earlier the above said landed property was belongs to one Smt.Shivarudramma w/o Byregowda @ Kariyappa and Smt.Latha.B D/o Byregowda @ Kariyappa, who were acquired the above said landed property through Regd.Partition deed dt.13-7-2005 which is bearing document No.KNK-1-01447/2005-06. Later on the above said Smt.Shivarudramma w/o Byregowda @ Kariyappa and Smt.Latha & their family members have jointly the sold the above said landed property in favour of Sri.B.Suresh s/o late Boraiah under a registered sale deed dt.6-8-2020, which is bearing document No.KNK-1-03324/2020-21. Thereafter said Sri.B.Suresh has sold the above said landed property in favour of present Owner Smt.Bhaghyalakkshmi.B w/o Ramesh.H.M. Hence My client further states that any disputes regarding ownership or possession of the schedule property, member of the public hereby advised to place their claim with appropriate written evidence **within 15 days,** from the date of publication of this notice there after will not be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY : All the Part and Parcel of Landed property bearing Sy.No.107/2 measuring 1 Acre 01 guntas, situated at Bekuppe village, Kasaba hobli, Kanakapura taluk, Bangalore South District, which is bounded on the **East by** : land of Honnappa s/o Kadakkigowda, **Westby:** Government road, **Northby:** Land of Honnappa, and **South by :** Lands of Sirigegowda, Kadegowda & others.

S. UMESH. B.A.L.L.B.
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Bins to wins, workers earn big cheers

Residents honour civic workers on Labour Day, join cleaning drive near Sankey Tank, urge eco-friendly habits and stronger public participation

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Around 170 pourakarmikas were felicitated on Friday by residents of Sadashivanagar under Voice of Sadashivanagar, a community initiative, on the occasion of Labour Day. The highlight of the programme was residents joining hands with pourakarmikas to keep the roads around Sankey Tank clean and tidy. Shilpa Jatti of Voice of Sadashivanagar and Malleswaram Guarantee Implementation Committee Chairman Anoop Iyengar were present.

Speaking on the occasion, Shilpa Jatti emphasised the importance of residents joining hands with the government to keep the city clean.

Residents and pourakarmikas participating in cleaning programme around Sankey Tank on Friday

"There are some residents who throw garbage on roads and in vacant plots. Single-use plastic is harmful to the environment and is not biodegradable. I urge residents not to use single-use plastic and to take measures to segregate waste at source," she said.

She said that pourakarmikas have been working hard to keep the roads clean without taking leave. "We thought of felicitating around 170 pourakarmikas in recognition of their contribution to keeping the city clean. Many trees fell on Wednesday evening when a hailstorm swept through the city. I urge the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) to plant tamarind and pongam (honge) saplings," she added.

Meanwhile, Tasni, a student of Chitrakala Parishath, said she was very happy to participate in the programme. "I am doing an internship with a private firm. Two more students also participated in the cleaning programme," she said.

Appreciating pourakarmikas for their hard work and dedication, Anoop Iyengar, Chairman of the Malleswaram Guarantee Implementation Committee, said that they play an important role in ensuring community health. "Pourakarmikas are as important as doctors in hospitals. They are cleanliness warriors. I appeal to residents to segregate waste at source and hand it over to pourakarmikas who collect garbage door to door," he said.

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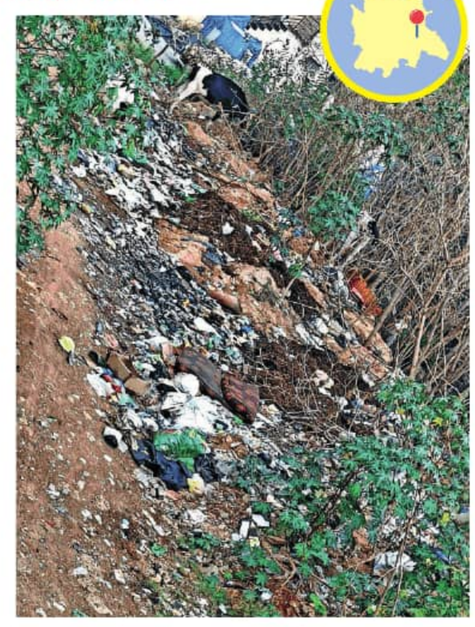
Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Road decay
Hebbal

Poor-quality roadwork is causing rapid deterioration and unsafe conditions on Hebbal Main Road.

Hygiene crisis
Cox Town



Unregulated dumping of garbage, including cow dung, has created severe hygiene issues in the locality.

Pipeline delay
RT Nagar

Unfinished pipeline work, debris dumping, and neglected waste have made daily life difficult for residents at RT Nagar.

Four deaths mark escalating elephant conflict in B'luru South

Elephant incursions into farmlands and villages continue rising, causing deaths, injuries, and growing fear among residents in Bengaluru South district

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Bengaluru South district is grappling with a worsening human-elephant conflict, with four deaths reported in the past nine months, highlighting growing danger from elephants straying into settlements. Victims include farmers and a member of the elephant task force, showing both civilians and frontline personnel remain at risk. Five others have been injured in separate incidents, as attacks continue with alarming frequency across the district.

Worst-hit areas include Kanakapura, Harohalli, Ramanagara and Channapatna taluks, where elephants regularly enter farmlands in search of food and water. Kanakapura has emerged as the epicentre due to proximity to forest regions such as Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary and Bannerghatta National Park, along with river systems that attract wildlife.

Forest officials attribute increased elephant movement to the summer season, which reduces food and water availability inside forests, pushing herds toward agricultural lands. In several cases, solitary elephants separated from herds have wandered into villages, leading to fatal encounters.

Kanakapura emerges as epicentre of ongoing elephant conflict

> **Unless we restore forest corridors, protect water sources, and reduce pressure on their ecosystems, both human and elephant deaths will keep rising**
>
> –Elephant conservation activist

The impact on farmers has been severe, with crop destruction and constant fear forcing many to abandon agriculture. Protests have been held, with farmers demanding the Forest Department lease vulnerable farmlands and provide annual compensation. They argue existing measures have failed to prevent elephants from returning, even after relocation to forests like Bandipur or Nagarahole.

Recent deaths underline the crisis. In August 2025, a 20-year-old elephant task force member was killed during an operation in Kanakapura. In October and December, two farmers in Harohalli died in separate attacks, while in April 2026, another farmer was killed in Kanakapura.

An activist said, "This is not just a law-and-order issue, it is an environmental failure. Elephants are pushed out of habitats. Without restoring corridors, protecting water sources, and reducing ecological pressure, both human and elephant deaths will keep rising."

Bengaluru's cement-free road signals sustainable future ahead

ECO Concrete technology replaces cement with industrial by-products, achieving nearly 80 per cent emission reduction while ensuring strength and long-term durability

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

In a move that could reshape road construction in India, Bengaluru now hosts the country's first cement-free cast-in-situ concrete road. Developed at the Army School campus, the pilot project demonstrates that roads can be built without traditional cement, significantly reducing emissions and water consumption while offering a sustainable alternative.

The road, in use for over a year, is being projected as a proof of concept for sustainable infrastructure that can reduce reliance on carbon-intensive materials while maintaining performance under traffic and weather conditions.

Speaking to Bangalore Mirror, Sourabh Kumar of Pothole Raja and Founder, Eco Path Innovations, said the road uses proprietary "ECO Concrete," a zero-cement geopolymer technology. "Instead of cement, the binder system uses GGBS, an industrial by-product from steel manufacturing, combined with proprietary Eco Path binders."

Kumar explained that conventional concrete roads rely heavily on cement as the primary binder, making them carbon intensive. "For M40 grade concrete, approximately 440 kg of cement per cubic metre was completely replaced with zero cement, leading to nearly 80 per cent reduction in emissions," he said.

According to him, each cubic metre of M40 concrete used in the road avoids nearly 396 kg of CO emissions, equivalent to driving a petrol car for about 1,600 to 1,800 km or the annual absorption of 18 to 20 mature trees.

Beyond reducing emissions during construction, the road offers sustainability advantages across its lifecycle. "Zero cement means about 80 per cent reduction in embodied carbon during construction. We also use industrial by-products, reducing landfill waste, and the technology requires zero water curing," he said.

He added that the material gains strength over time and is engineered for durability. Though designed for M40 strength, it can exceed M50 over 100 days. The concrete is denser, stronger and more robust than conventional material, reducing maintenance needs and lowering lifecycle emissions significantly.

On recyclability, Kumar said the material supports a circular construction model. "The road can be crushed and reused as aggregate, and the same material can be used to manufacture new ECO Concrete, enabling a closed-loop system," he said.

Addressing durability, the road is expected to outperform conventional concrete when properly designed and executed, offering improved acid resistance and better fire resistance than standard cement concrete.

The Army School Road was selected as it offers a controlled, yet active, real-world environment. "The road is used daily by students, staff, and operational vehicles. Army trucks and heavy vehicles regularly pass through, allowing us to validate the technology under actual stress and load conditions," he said.

Pilot project showcases sustainable alternative to carbon-intensive construction

> **The road is used daily by students, staff, and operational vehicles. Army trucks and heavy vehicles regularly pass through, allowing us to validate the technology under actual stress and load conditions**
>
> –Sourabh Kumar, Founder, Eco Path Innovations

IN HIGH COURT

Bus death row: ₹1.1 cr blow to corporation

The Karnataka High Court has upheld a compensation award exceeding Rs 1.10 crore to the family of a government employee who died after falling from a moving bus, while criticising the conduct of the Kalyan Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC).

A division bench of Justices Suraj Govindaraj and Dr Chillakur Sumalatha also imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on the corporation, noting that it took inconsistent positions during proceedings and attempted to mislead the court.

The case relates to a 2023 incident in Sedam involving Vinod Kumar, a Revenue Department employee. He was reportedly standing near the rear entrance of an overcrowded bus when the driver allegedly drove at high speed, causing him to fall and suffer fatal head injuries. In its appeal, KKRTC argued that the victim contributed to the accident through negligence. Highlighting this contradiction, the bench observed that the corporation could not fault its staff internally and later shift blame onto the deceased before the court. The High Court dismissed the appeal and reaffirmed the compensation, stressing accountability in public transport cases. **–BMB**

Missing documents sink 30-year-old criminal case

The Karnataka High Court has quashed criminal proceedings in a case dating back nearly 30 years, observing that a trial cannot continue in the complete absence of records

The issue surfaced when a 65-year-old Bengaluru resident applied for passport renewal and was flagged during police verification as an accused in a case registered in 1996 at Halasur police station. The court observed that without records, the petitioner could neither defend himself nor could prosecution establish its case.

The judge emphasised that the State has responsibility to maintain records, and failure cannot be held against an individual. Continuing proceedings in such a situation would leave the accused in indefinite legal uncertainty. Concluding that a fair trial was impossible, the High Court set aside proceedings pending before a Bengaluru magistrate, effectively bringing the decades-old case to an end. **–BMB**

Coal-fired stations drive Karnataka's power surge amid summer strain

Hydel output dwindles as Ballari, Raichur and Yermarus plants shoulder rising demand, keeping homes and industries powered through scorching heat

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Ballari's three thermal units run nonstop, generating 36.05 million units daily as Karnataka struggles to meet soaring electricity demand

Families and businesses brace for relentless summer demand as thermal plants work overtime, coal supplies remain critical, and officials prepare for sustained electricity pressure through the coming peak months

Karnataka is witnessing a sharp rise in electricity demand even before peak summer has fully set in, creating significant pressure on power generation systems across the state. Daily demand has reached 356.539 million units, while thermal power plants are currently contributing 106.96 million units to bridge the gap. With soaring temperatures and depleted reservoirs, hydroelectric generation has taken a hit, making the state increasingly dependent on thermal power stations to maintain supply.

Sources said intense heat has dried up water bodies, cutting hydel output and forcing authorities to rely heavily on thermal, wind and solar energy. Among these, thermal plants in Ballari and Raichur districts continue to play a central role in keeping supply stable. Facilities including the Ballari Thermal Power Station, Raichur Thermal Power Station and Yermarus Thermal Power Station have stepped up production to meet rising demand.

An official said, "These plants have been operating continuously, often under considerable operational pressure, to ensure there are no major disruptions in power supply. Coal supply has become equally critical amid rising demand. The Ballari Thermal Power Station alone requires around 25,000 metric tonnes of coal daily for uninterrupted generation. Coal is being sourced from states like Odisha, Maharashtra and Telangana to meet this requirement. At present, the plant has a stock of 2.50 lakh metric tonnes, which is sufficient for roughly 10 days. Officials have stated that there is no immediate shortage, but maintaining steady supply remains crucial as demand continues to rise through May and June."

Sources added that thermal plants are running at high capacity to keep pace with demand. At Ballari, all three units continue to operate round the clock, generating about 36.05 million units of electricity daily. Pressure is likely to persist over the next two months, traditionally the period of peak consumption. Seasonal spikes during Sankranti, Shivaratri and the period from Ugadi to June-end continue to drive higher usage this year as well.

In terms of infrastructure, the Ballari plant has three units with a combined capacity of 1,700 MW, including two 500 MW units and one 700 MW unit. The Raichur Thermal Power Station runs eight units with a total capacity of 1,720 MW, while the Yermarus plant operates two units of 800 MW each, forming the backbone of the state's thermal power network.

An official said, "Recent production figures indicate that plants are exceeding targets to cope with demand. In February, Ballari generated 855 million units against a demand of 805 million units. In March, production increased to over 887 million units, while April has already recorded over 840 million units generated against a target of 863 million units."

SEC tightens rules for local candidates

The State Election Commission has tightened rules for candidates contesting local body elections, making it compulsory to submit an affidavit along with the nomination papers. The revised order applies to all candidates across gram panchayats, taluk and zilla panchayats, and urban local bodies.

Updating earlier directives issued in 2003 and 2018, the Commission has introduced new provisions requiring candidates to disclose whether they have been disqualified under any statutory or local authority order, and to certify that they are not currently disqualified under such provisions. The move aims to ensure greater transparency in candidates' financial and legal backgrounds. Candidates must disclose finances, and face stricter scruntiny as state moves to expedite long- pending gram panchayat elections. **–BMB**

Centre extends NHM tenure till Sept

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has extended the tenure of the National Health Mission (NHM) by six months beyond March 31, allowing the flagship healthcare scheme to continue till September 30, 2026, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

In an order dated April 29, the ministry informed all State and Union Territory NHM Mission Directors that it granted the extension on an interim basis, pending appraisal and approval of centrally sponsored schemes under the 16th Finance Commission cycle. The ministry said the decision follows an Office Memorandum issued by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, which permits interim continuation of schemes ending on March 31, for up to six months or until appraisal concludes. **–BMB**

BM Property — Consumer Connect Initiative

Digital infrastructure sparks new investment corridors

The Karnataka government's plan to establish sustainable data parks in Bengaluru, Mysuru and Mangaluru is set to provide a major boost to the State's real estate sector, while reinforcing its position as a fast-growing digital infrastructure hub.

At a recent high-level meeting held at Shakti Bhavan, key ministers outlined plans to develop data parks with a combined capacity of 1,000 MW. A significant portion includes a 500 MW sustainable data centre park proposed near Hoskote in Bengaluru. The project will draw solar energy from Pavagada, underlining the State's focus on green and energy-efficient infrastructure.

The initiative is likely to significantly impact real estate. In and around Bengaluru, particularly near Hoskote, demand for industrial land is expected to rise sharply. This could push up land values and trigger the development of allied

segments such as logistics parks, warehousing facilities, commercial office spaces and data infrastructure clusters.

In Mangaluru, authorities have already identified around 350 acres in the Baikampady Industrial Area for a similar project, while officials continue to scout for suitable land parcels in Mysuru. The expansion into tier-2 cities is expected to open new investment corridors, promote balanced regional growth and ease pressure on Bengaluru's saturated property market.

Infrastructure readiness remains a key driver of investor interest. Assured access to power and water, including the use of treated water for operations, makes these locations viable for large-scale data centre developments and is likely to attract global players.

Ravi Gowda, a real estate agent, said, "The development is also expected to generate employment opportunities, which in turn will drive demand for residential housing, rental accommodations and retail spaces in these regions. Over time, these data parks could evolve into integrated economic zones with strong real estate ecosystems. With officials directed to expedite preparatory work and engage with investors, the initiative is poised to accelerate infrastructure-led growth. The project will enchance land use, boost investor confidence, and position karnataka as a key hub for technology investments and real estate growth.

Bidadi project approval sparks realty momentum

The State cabinet, chaired by the Chief Minister recently approved the final notification for land acquisition for the proposed Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township near Bidadi, clearing a key hurdle for one of the largest suburban development projects around the city. The project, led by the Greater Bengaluru Development Authority, involves acquiring around 7,881 acres across nine villages and affects nearly 6,300 farmers. The government issued preliminary notifications in March 2025 and extended deadlines due to procedural delays. With the final approval now in place, it will roll out compensation of 2.55–2.60 crore per acre along with rehabilitation measures, including site allotments for eligible beneficiaries.

The decision is expected to significantly impact Bengaluru's real estate sector, particularly along the Bidadi corridor. With large-scale planned development moving forward, land prices in surrounding areas are likely to rise, drawing interest from residential and commercial developers. The project will drive suburban expansion, reduce pressure on the city's core areas, and open up new growth zones, triggering fresh investment cycles.

Against all odds, she conquers global stage

Visually impaired runner Rakshita Raju rises from hardship to global acclaim, chasing Paralympic glory with grit, discipline and unbreakable determination

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KAUSHIK JN

Focused runner guided on track during high-intensity training session in Bengaluru

Balancing academics alongside rigorous routines, receives institutional backing, overcomes visual impairment challenges, seeks historic victory, dreams of hearing anthem echo during triumph

Hailing from a small town in Chikkamagaluru to the international para-athletics stage, Rakshita Raju is a testament to resilience, shaped by loss, discipline, and an unwavering belief in herself that can outpace any limitation. The visually impaired athlete, aged 25, has emerged as one of India's most promising para runners, blending personal struggle with international success.

Rakshita has built an impressive career in sport. She won a gold medal in the 1500 metres at the 2018 Asian Para Games held in Jakarta. This proved to be a breakthrough moment in her career, and in 2023 she secured another gold at the Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, followed by a silver medal at the Sharjah International Open Para Athletics Championship. She finished fifth at the World Para Athletics Championships held in Paris. Nationally, she has dominated multiple competitions, securing several gold medals across events including 200 metres, 400 metres, 800 metres and 1500 metres at various National Para Athletics Championships, and delivering podium finishes at Indian Open competitions.

Rakshita lost her parents at a young age and was raised by her grandmother, aunt and brother. It was during her school years in 2016 that she took up athletics, a decision that would go on to define her life. "Winning at the Olympics and Asian Games gave me the confidence that I can compete with the best, and I did. It was truly a motivating moment for me, and I have always taken my training seriously," said Raju.

During the initial days, she recalls travelling by train to reach training centres, often covering long distances. These efforts soon brought her recognition in Bengaluru, where her talent was noticed, opening doors to structured training and opportunities. "Initially, it was difficult. I used to travel by train and manage with the limited resources I had. But I knew I had to continue in order to achieve something," said Rakshita.

Today, Raju trains at the Sports Authority of India campus in Bengaluru under her coach, Rahul Balakrishnan, who says she benefits from sports science, recovery systems and nutritional guidance at SAI, which have transformed her journey. He adds that she is preparing for major international competitions, with expenses covered by the central government's Ministry of Sports Affairs. Organisations such as the Paralympic Committee of India and GoSports Foundation, along with the Department of Youth Services, Karnataka, have played a crucial role in her development.

"Rakshita comes from a challenging background, but her dedication and discipline stand out. She has always been very consistent and has earned the respect of sponsors and supporters throughout her journey," said Rahul.

Despite the support system in place, visually impaired athletes face a major challenge: securing a guide runner. The coach explains that without a guide runner, visually impaired athletes cannot compete, and the lack of state funding for this role has become a growing concern. He adds that the role is largely voluntary, and if the government compensates guide runners, the system could be streamlined, as without them athletes lose the opportunity to participate. "In India, there is still no proper policy or incentive for guide runners. This remains a major challenge we are battling with some of our athletes," he said.

In 2020, Rakshita faced a setback, as she qualified for the Paralympics but could not participate due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She says she was disappointed but did not deviate from her goal and continued her rigorous training. Her belief in herself and consistent performances led to her meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi. According to Raju, "For me, disability is not a limitation. If one is determined, they can achieve anything. My simple belief has always seen me through."

Beyond her athletics career, she shows the same commitment to education. She has completed her BA and is now pursuing an MA degree. She aspires to become an IAS officer. At present, her dream remains on the track, as she aims to win a gold medal and hear the national anthem at the Olympics held in India. "I want the world to know about Indian sportspersons. Each of us trains very hard, comes from difficult circumstances, and it is every athlete's dream to make their country proud. Competing internationally shows the true impact of sport, shaping and changing many lives," she said.

Her coach shares her vision, saying, "She has come a long way for someone so young. She shows great potential to reach the highest level. If the support she is receiving continues, she is sure to flourish and put the country and state on the radar of many competitive nations."

As of now, Rakshita continues to train in Bengaluru, preparing for upcoming competitions with unwavering focus. From travelling alone for training to standing on international podiums, her journey is becoming a defining note in the evolving landscape of para sport in India. For Raju, every race is about pushing boundaries and redefining possibilities. She carries a quiet determination to prove that limitations do not define a person, but the courage to overcome them does.

Clean image wins key postings

In a significant administrative reform, the State Government is introducing a new system that gives priority in Revenue Department transfers to officials with fewer or no pending cases or allegations. The move, part of a counselling-based digital transfer process, aims to improve transparency and efficiency in governance. Under this system, officials will be ranked based on "demerit points" linked to their disciplinary or criminal records, ensuring that those with clean records are given preference for key postings.

An official said that demerit points will be assigned as follows: four points for criminal or raid-related cases, three points if prosecution has been sanctioned, two points for departmental punishment, and one point for pending enquiries. Officials with higher scores will be pushed lower in priority during transfers. The initiative seeks to curb the influence of recommendations and favouritism that previously allowed certain officials to retain prime postings. "By enabling a fully digital, counselling-based process, the government aims to place honest and efficient officers in high-value positions, reduce corruption, and deliver better governance to the public, while also creating a positive, performance-driven environment within departments," an official added. **–BMB**

State expands orthopaedic treatment access

Karnataka's orthopaedic mentorship programme is transforming government hospitals by enabling total knee replacement (TKR) and total hip replacement (THR) surgeries and reducing dependence on private facilities.

Introduced under a September 2024 government order, the initiative deploys expert surgeons to government hospitals while training in-house doctors, building long-term surgical capacity.

99 supervised surgeries were conducted (49 THR, 50 TKR), along with 18 independent procedures by trained government surgeons (11 THR, 7 TKR).

Earlier, Karnataka relied heavily on private hospitals: of 1,709 procedures in 2023–24, only 601 (35 per cent) were done in government facilities.

To improve access, increased empanelled hospitals from 17 to 39, covering medical colleges, district and taluk hospitals. The Online Referral System was tightened in October 2024 to ensure clinical scrutiny and reduce unnecessary surgeries. Government hospital surgeries rose from 633 in 2023–24 to 1,119 in 2025–26, with share increasing from 36 per cent to 99 per cent, cutting referrals to private hospitals.

Patients travel shorter distances, reducing costs as most procedures are free. Reimbursement for government hospitals has been raised from 75 per cent to 100 per cent, alongside infrastructure upgrades. Free second-opinion helpline under SAST offers round-the-clock advice in Kannada English languages support. **–BMB**

Members of the All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU) participate in an International Workers' Day rally from Town Hall to Freedom Park, in Bengaluru on Friday

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I, Shanaz Begum W/o Ghani Naseer Uddin Qureshi R/o No 28 G C Colony Queens Road, Shivaji Nagar H K P Road Post, Bengaluru - 560051 Have Changed My Name to Shahanz Saira for All Purposes.

I, Athiyya Shaheen R/O 82/3, B Block, Lingarajapuram, B'luru-560084 have changed my name to Athiya Shaheen N for all purposes

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ICSE Toppers of the Academic Year 2025-26

Virat gave wonderful start, but team was unable to build partnerships, says batting coach and mentor

'Losing wickets in clusters never helps in T20'

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) batting coach and mentor Dinesh Karthik said losing wickets at regular intervals despite a dominating start from opener Virat Kohli hurt the team's chances as they went down by four wickets to Gujarat Titans (GT) at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

RCB were bowled out for 155 in 19.2 overs after being put in to bat, a total that Gujarat Titans chased down comfortably in 15.5 overs, finishing at 158/6 with 25 balls to spare.

Karthik lauded Virat Kohli's aggressive start but admitted that regular wickets derailed the innings. "I thought Virat started wonderfully, vintage Virat. The kind of shots he played, especially in the Rabada over, were outstanding. But we lost wickets in a cluster and kept doing it. Every time we had an opportunity to get ahead or build a partnership, we lost a wicket, and that never helps in a T20 game," Karthik said in a video released by RCB on X.

Kohli struck a quick 28 off 13 balls, while Devdutt Padikkal top-scored with 40, but the middle-order collapse ensured RCB could only manage a below-par total.

"It eventually caught up with us, and we ended up with a below-par score," Karthik added.

Despite the defeat, Karthik praised the team's attitude in the field as they attempted to defend the total. "What was commendable was the attitude and the way the bowlers came together. Like a champion team would, we gave them jitters through the middle. If a couple of things had gone our way, it could have been different, but I'm very proud of the effort," he said.

RCB director of cricket Mo Bobat echoed similar sentiments, highlighting the bowling unit's effort in making the Gujarat Titans work hard for the chase.

"The pleasing and encouraging thing is obviously the bowlers. They put in a good shift again today. It was good to see Romario find a bit of rhythm, too," Bobat said.

"You're not going to win every game, but when you come out second best, you've got to make the opposition really fight for their win, and I think we did that today," he noted.

Gujarat Titans' chase was powered by captain Shubman Gill, who smashed 43 off just 18 balls, while Jos Buttler (39) and Rahul Tewatia (27 not out) ensured there were no major hiccups.

Looking ahead, Bobat called for improvement as the team prepares for its next fixture. "We need to lick our wounds, we've got a few days off, and we need to come back a little bit sharper. We head to Lucknow now, another important game, and hopefully we can adapt quickly and put in a better performance to get more points on the board," he added.

Despite the loss, RCB still remains at number two in the points table with 12 points in nine matches. They will next face Lucknow Super Giants on May 7. **–IANS**

Gujarat Titans' captain Shubman Gill, front right, being congratulated by Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Virat Kohli, back right, and others after winning the IPL match, in Ahmedabad, on Thursday

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Skipper Parag's 90 lifts Rajasthan Royals to 225

Rajasthan Royals' captain Riyan Parag led with a gritty and commanding knock, helping his team post a competitive total of 225/6 in 20 overs despite Delhi Capitals regaining crucial momentum thanks to a late burst from Mitchell Starc in their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 clash at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur on Friday.

The highly anticipated contest began with an unexpected twist. While everyone expected a showdown between Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Starc, it was Yashasvi Jaiswal who stole the spotlight first. He hit Starc for a six on the very first ball he faced, but fell two balls later to a high full toss, lobbing a simple return catch. RR found themselves rocked early at 6 for 1 in 0.3 overs. Things got worse when Sooryavanshi, undone by a precise yorker, was bowled by Kyle Jamieson for 12, leaving them at 12 for 2 in 1.5 overs.

With the top order shaken, Parag started to rebuild alongside Dhruv Jurel. Despite concerns about Jurel's strike rate of 150.86 at No. 3, the pair steadied RR. They reached 56 for 2 at the end of the Power-play. Delhi Capitals tightened their grip immediately after, with Kuldeep Yadav delivering a solid spell. Axar Patel also recovered well after a rough start, limiting RR to 91 for 2 in 10 overs. However, Parag gradually shifted his approach. He scored a measured fifty off 32 balls, celebrating with a four and a stunning six off T. Natarajan. By the 11th over, he had reached 60 off 34, pushing RR to 106 for 2. Jurel showed flashes of brilliance with a six off Axar but fell for 42 off 30, leaving RR at 114 for 3 in 11.4 overs.

A strategic move to promote Ravindra Jadeja up the order briefly worked in RR's favour. Parag dominated Jamieson, hitting 32 runs off just 12 balls against him. By the 16th over, RR were well positioned at 166 for 3, with Parag batting on 90 off 49.

Just when RR seemed set for a big score, Starc changed the game. Using his pace and variations, he dismissed Jadeja with a slower short ball and followed it by removing Parag with a hard-length delivery. Parag's impressive innings ended at 90 off 50, with RR slipping to 173 for 5, losing momentum at a critical moment.

The innings got a late lift from Donovan Ferreira, who produced a remarkable cameo. After struggling against Kuldeep, Ferreira turned the tide, scoring 47 off just 14 balls. His assault included several sixes off near-perfect yorkers, as RR raced to 193 for 5 in 18 overs, rescuing what briefly looked like a stalled innings. **–IANS**

Rajasthan Royals' captain Riyan Parag celebrates with teammate Dhruv Jurel after scoring fifty runs

HIGHLIGHTS

Team first, individual milestones next

Seasoned Royal Challengers Bengaluru pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar said he has reached a stage in his career where team success takes precedence over individual milestones.

The 36-year-old, who is currently the leading wicket-taker in the tournament, returned figures of 3 for 28, his fifth three-wicket haul of the season, in RCB's four-wicket loss to Gujarat Titans, taking him to the top of the bowling chart.

While the performance earned him the Purple Cap, Bhuvneshwar downplayed its significance, emphasising a shift in priorities that comes with experience.

"It's good that I got the Purple Cap. But I think I have come out of that time where I want to achieve something individually," Bhuvneshwar said at the post-match press conference.

"Of course, I want to achieve something, but now it's more of a team. I'm not young anymore. Of course, when you're young, you want to win those awards, and it comes when you do well.

"But when you want to work towards the team's goal, and you get an individual award or reward, you feel good. But honestly, I'm just trying my best. Getting confidence from the management. That's all I can say," he added.

Put in to bat, RCB endured a rare batting collapse and were bowled out for 155, a total that proved insufficient in a tournament dominated by high-scoring chases.

Bhuvneshwar acknowledged that chasing has become easier this season across venues.

"If you look at this IPL, chasing is a bit easier in any ground because the way wicket behaves and dew comes. So, yes, it could be different.

"But yeah, we didn't win the toss. We were asked to bat first. We tried our best in bowling. So now the result is that we lost. That's all."

Defending a a modest total, Bhuvneshwar said RCB's strategy was to attack and take wickets rather than contain runs.

"If you look at the scenario, there was some help for seamers, and we had Romario (Shepeherd), third seamer. So, we wanted to take a chance.

"And Suyash (Sharma) is someone who is not easy to pick. So, we wanted to get wickets as quick as possible. So, that's the reason he didn't bowl.

"We couldn't have won the match by defending runs. We could have won by taking wickets, and the bowlers who bowled were the best bowlers to get those wickets," he added. **–PTI**

Rahul has an ambition

Delhi Capitals opener KL Rahul has made it clear that personal milestones count for little without titles, saying his biggest ambition remains matching MS Dhoni's haul of five IPL trophies even as he continues to scale the run charts in the league.

Rahul, who recently went past Dhoni on the league's all-time run-scorers list, downplayed the achievement and reiterated his team-first approach.

"I didn't even realise I had gone past Mahi bhai. Personal milestones are good. They reassure me that I am on the right track. But what would truly make me happy is winning as many trophies as MS Dhoni," Rahul said on JioStar.

"Cricket is a team sport. You want to win trophies. You want to be part of successful sides. That has always been my goal."

The stylish right-hander also opened up about his remarkable record at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, attributing it to an emotional connect with his home ground. **–PTI**

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

CROCODILE CALM MENACE

Our reader shares a striking image of a marsh crocodile resting on a rock in the Cauvery River at Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, its jaws menacingly open. Captured in a moment of still intensity, the reptile's presence reflects the raw power and delicate balance of riverine ecosystems.

The picture was clicked by reader **NJ Ravi Chander**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Key suburban rail stretches faces retender despite project momentum

Two Mallige corridor packages awarded, but crucial Benniganahalli–Shettihalli stretch awaits fresh tender after single bid setback

Progress on the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project (BSRP) has picked up pace with two out of three packages under the 'Mallige' corridor finalised in the recent round of retendering. However, the most critical stretch between Benniganahalli and Shettihalli is set to be retendered again after receiving a single bid.

Following the withdrawal of Larsen & Toubro (L&T) from the project in March 2025, authorities divided the Mallige corridor into three packages and floated fresh bids. For the first package, estimated at ₹1,085 crore, only NCC Limited submitted a bid, prompting the Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Company (K-RIDE) to consider issuing a fresh tender to ensure competitive participation.

The first package forms a key part of the 25.01-km Benniganahalli–Chikkabanavara stretch, the initial corridor of the Mallige line. This 7.79-km segment involves the design and construction of an elevated viaduct, including ramps between Benniganahalli and Shettihalli. A major highlight of this stretch is a double-decker structure between Yeshwanthpur and Lottegollahalli, featuring a grade-1 flyover with the suburban rail line at level 2. The package also includes stations at Mattikere and Benniganahalli.

Meanwhile, authorities have awarded the second and third packages under the Mallige corridor to PJB Engineers. The second package covers the 11.59-km Benniganahalli–Hebbal stretch, while the third includes the 5.80-km Yeshwanthpur–Chikkabanavara section. These contracts are valued at approximately ₹263 crore and ₹103 crore, respectively, though officials are yet to issue work orders.

Officials noted that the first package remains the most crucial. Earlier, L&T had secured this portion for ₹859 crore and worked

Commuters await relief as progress quickens on suburban rail, yet the vital double-decker viaduct package stalls again, highlighting land hurdles and tender challenges slowing transformative transport plans

on it for nearly two-and-a-half years before withdrawing due to land acquisition challenges. The setback delayed progress and forced authorities to initiate retendering in November 2025. In parallel, planning for the 'Kanaka' corridor is progressing, though authorities have not yet begun retendering.

An official said, "Work is currently underway on the interchange station at Yeshwanthpur, being executed by NCC. This station will serve as a crucial junction connecting the Benniganahalli–Chikkabanavara line with the KSR Bengaluru–Devanahalli corridor. Another interchange station linking the Yelahanka–Kanaka corridor will be taken up once land acquisition progresses."

Officials also confirmed that they are discussing signalling systems and rolling stock procurement with the government, with a decision expected soon. **— BMB**

Construction momentum builds on suburban rail line, but unresolved land issues and weak participation delay execution of a key corridor segment

DID YOU KNOW?

New research has revealed that during the Cretaceous Period, a giant octopus species may have ruled the seas as an apex predator, much like the mythical Kraken of Norse folklore.

Scientists identified fossils of beaks belonging to Nanaimoteuthis haggarti, which lived around 86 to 72 million years ago and is estimated to have measured between 22 and 61 feet in length. Paleontologist Yasuhiro Iba of Hokkaido University described the creature as a "Cretaceous Kraken," highlighting its large body, strong jaws and advanced behaviour. The study suggests that marine ecosystems were not dominated solely by vertebrates, as previously believed, but also by giant invertebrates like octopuses. Significant wear on the fossilised beaks indicates these animals crushed hard prey such as shells and bones. The presence of fin-like features, inferred from beak shapes, suggests they were agile swimmers. Sharing oceans with mosasaurs, plesiosaurs and large sharks, these octopuses likely competed at the top of the food chain, reshaping our understanding of prehistoric marine life. **— Reuters**

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Is mouthwash bad for the heart? Here's what research actually says

The Claim: Social media claims mouthwash raises blood pressure by killing beneficial oral bacteria, disrupting nitric oxide production, and harming heart health, suggesting people should avoid regular mouthwash use entirely.
Fact: Evidence shows only strong antiseptic mouthwashes like chlorhexidine may affect bacteria and slightly raise blood pressure short-term, while everyday mild mouthwashes show minimal impact on heart health overall.

Social media videos are claiming that mouthwash can raise the risk of high blood pressure and potentially damage heart health.

According to some of these videos, this is caused by mouthwash wiping out "good" oral bacteria that are important for the cardiovascular system. While it's a striking message, don't throw your mouthwash away just yet. The reality is far more complex.

Our mouths contain a wide variety of bacteria. Together, these bacteria form a balanced and diverse microbiome that helps prevent the overgrowth of disease-linked bacteria, supports normal metabolic functions, and contributes to both oral and overall health. One key role these bacteria play is converting nitrate from foods such as leafy greens into nitrite. When we swallow nitrite, the body turns it into nitric oxide through the nitrate-nitrite-nitric oxide pathway, also called the enterosalivary pathway. Nitric oxide plays an essential role in regulating blood pressure and supporting brain and muscle function.

Some online influencers claim mouthwash harms heart health by affecting these "healthy" bacteria that produce nitric oxide. Several small studies have shown that mouthwash can alter the balance of oral bacteria, potentially reducing their ability to convert nitrate into nitrite. One study of 19 healthy volunteers found that adults who used chlorhexidine mouthwash for seven days saw a small increase in blood pressure and reduced nitrite levels. Another study reported that rinsing with 0.12% chlorhexidine gluconate twice daily for one week significantly increased blood pressure in 27 healthy adults.

However, an important detail often missed in viral videos is the type of mouthwash used. Many studies that found this link involved chlorhexidine, a strong antiseptic recommended only for short-term use in people with gum disease or after dental procedures. Its antimicrobial action disrupts oral bacteria, including those involved in nitric oxide production.

Research comparing different mouthwashes showed that mild formulations did not significantly affect nitrate conversion, while stronger antibacterial types partially or completely blocked it. Stronger mouthwashes also showed a link to higher systolic blood pressure. Alcohol, another common ingredient, may influence the oral microbiome, but evidence on its specific cardiovascular impact remains limited.

Overall, evidence suggests that mild, over-the-counter mouthwashes are less likely to interfere with this pathway or affect blood pressure. A long-term study of 354 adults found that good oral hygiene, including brushing and flossing, lowered the risk of cardiovascular death, while regular mouthwash use had no clear impact. Experts advise choosing mouthwash based on need and using stronger types like chlorhexidine only when prescribed. Maintaining oral health remains crucial, as untreated infections themselves can contribute to heart disease. **— The Conversation**

Emergency helpline receives around 8,000 to 10,000 calls daily

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

operator. She added that many such calls are triggered accidentally due to the government-mandated emergency calling feature on mobile phones.

According to police officers, the emergency helpline receives around 8,000 to 10,000 calls every day, but many of these are blank calls where no one speaks.

In 2025, the helpline recorded 5.18 lakh service calls, compared to 15.89 lakh blank calls. Similarly, in 2024, there were 4.44 lakh genuine calls, but blank calls stood at 15.65 lakh, showing a consistently higher number of non-responsive calls by the public.

Police officials at the command centre said that many calls received these days are not real emergencies. They explained that people are calling the 112 helpline for a wide range of reasons. Some callers, especially senior citizens and individuals living alone, dial 112 simply to talk, as they feel lonely and seek comfort or companionship from the operators. In a few cases, people have even called for minor needs such as asking for help to purchase milk packets.

A bizarre dispute was reported in Seshadripuram in April after a male cat impregnated a neighbour's female cat, leading to four kittens and a heated argument. The female cat's owner demanded that the neighbour take responsibility, even placing the kittens at his doorstep. The situation escalated with verbal abuse and threats. The Seshadripuram Police intervened, clarified no legal obligation, and resolved the issue by shifting the kittens to a neutral home.

Police officials said such non-emergency calls are still manageable, but the real concern is crank calls made with the intention of harassing operators. "These callers, often targeting women staff, use vulgar language and make inappropriate personal remarks. Such calls are usually repeated by the same individuals. In many cases, the caller stays silent if a man answers, but becomes abusive when a woman picks up, making comments about her voice or asking to meet," an official said.

According to official data, the 112 helpline received 3,728 crank calls in 2024, which rose to 7,848 the following year. In 2026, 3,532 such calls had already been reported upto March.

Officials explained they wait for one to two minutes before disconnecting a crank call, as it is not always clear what the caller is going through. If the caller appears to be mentally distressed, the call is redirected to Tele-MANAS, otherwise, it is politely disconnected. They added that if a person repeatedly makes such calls, the number is temporarily blocked for 24 hours. However, it is later unblocked to ensure access during a genuine emergency. Officials also said that strict legal action will be taken against those making prank calls.

Use limited resources, finish work on time, staff told

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

regions. In some parts of the state, enumerators have pointed out that proper groundwork such as boundary identification and accurate mapping has not been carried out. Given the hilly terrain and scattered housing patterns in rural areas, this has made the task even more challenging, with homes often located two to three kilometres apart.

Enumerators have also flagged discrepancies in workload allocation. While some have been assigned around 60 to 70 houses, others have been given as many as 200 to 300, leading to imbalance. Those with higher allocations are struggling to complete their work under harsh weather conditions, while others are able to finish relatively quickly. Field staff, many of whom are teachers, say the uneven distribution reflects a lack of scientific planning in assigning duties.

Adding to the difficulties is the delay in distribution of census kits. "Even 10 days after the exercise began, full kits have not reached nearly half the districts in the state. A standard kit is expected to include items such as a cap, identity card, pen, markers, pencils, notebook, transparent file, satellite maps and copies of official documents. However, in many districts, enumerators have only received partial materials such as a training booklet, a marker, plain sheets and an appointment order copy," an enumerator said.

Officials acknowledged the delay, stating that kits are expected to arrive within a week and will be distributed thereafter. Meanwhile, enumerators have been instructed to continue their work using the limited resources available and complete the task within the stipulated timeline.

Authorities maintain that since the census is being conducted in a digital format, the need for physical materials is reduced. They also attributed the delay in kit supply to logistical issues, including disruptions linked to protests in Noida.

Nursing student found dead, probe intensifies

A 20-year-old nursing student from Kerala studying at a private college was found dead under suspicious circumstances in a hostel in Bommasandra, prompting his family to seek a detailed police investigation.

The deceased, Adhityan PA, a second-year student, was found hanging from a ceiling fan in his room on April 29, police said. A suicide note recovered from the spot stated that no one should be held responsible for his death.

Preliminary investigation suggests the student may have been suffering from depression, though police said other angles are also being examined.

According to a complaint filed by his father, Pradeep S from Thiruvananthapuram, the family was informed around 12.30 pm that the student had been hospitalised in critical condition.

He reached Bengaluru the next day and was informed by a college representative that his son had died.

Raising doubts, the father alleged foul play and sought a thorough probe, recalling his son mentioning drug use among hostel inmates' weeks earlier.

—BMB

Three-day closure on Peenya elevated flyover

Traffic movement on the Peenya Elevated Flyover, officially known as Dr. Sri Shivakumar Swamiji Flyover, will be completely restricted for three days to facilitate final load testing following completion of cable repair works.

According to traffic police, the restriction will be in force from 5 am on May 5 to 11 am on May 8, 2026, based on a request from the National Highways Authority of India to ensure structural integrity.

Vehicular movement will be prohibited between Kennametal Widia Upper Ramp and SRS Down Ramp, and from CMTI Junction to Parle-G Toll via the flyover.

Motorists travelling from Nelamangala towards Bengaluru must use the service road via 8th Mile, Dasarahalli, Jalahalli Cross, Peenya Police Station Junction, and SRS Junction, while those heading towards Nelamangala must follow designated diversions.

Police have urged the public to cooperate.

—BMB

Chid welfare panel member held for blackmail, harassment

A member of a Child Welfare Committee has been arrested by Rajarajeshwari Nagar Police on charges of sexually exploiting multiple women and blackmailing them using private videos.

The accused, identified as Chandregowda, was taken into custody following a complaint filed by one of the victims. Police said he allegedly used fake identities to approach women, posing as a police officer, lawyer, and media professional to gain their trust.

According to the complaint, the woman, living separately from her husband for 7–8 years, met him in August 2021 during work events.

Police said he later blackmailed her using private photos and videos, threatening to upload them on social media. He is also accused of impersonating her husband to rent a house using her Aadhaar details and taking money and valuables.

The complainant alleged he extorted nearly ₹5 lakh and cheated multiple women similarly. Police recovered over 20 videos from his phone. A case has been registered, and investigation is ongoing.

—BMB

16 Years of Celebrating Ashadhi Ekadashi An Evening of Abhangs 'BOLAVA VITTHAL'
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॥ बोलावा विठ्ठल ॥
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Jayateerth Mevundi
Friday 17 July 2026 | 6:30 pm
At Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Bengaluru
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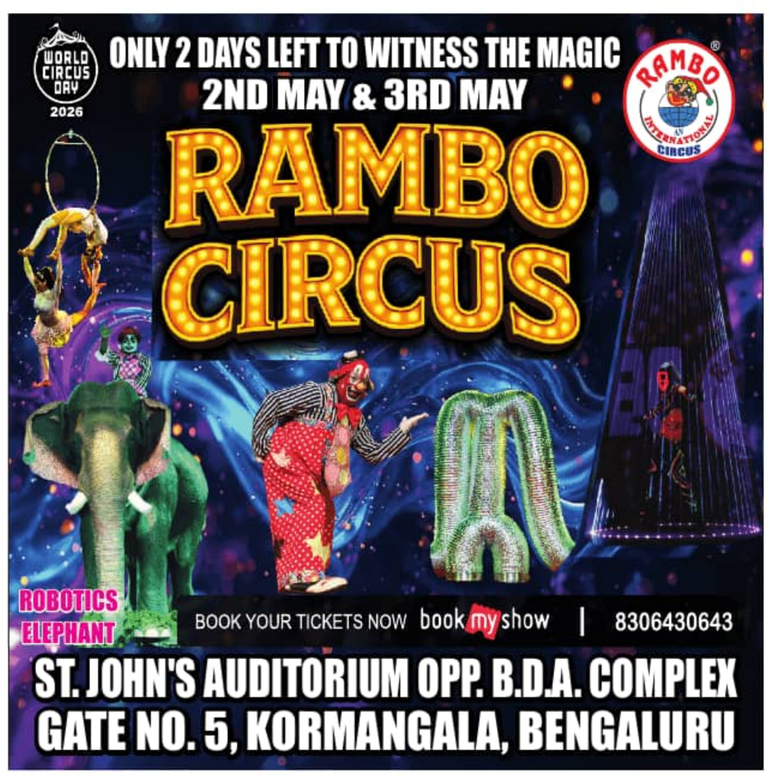
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UPI sees 25 pc growth at 22.35 billion transactions in April, starts FY27 on strong note

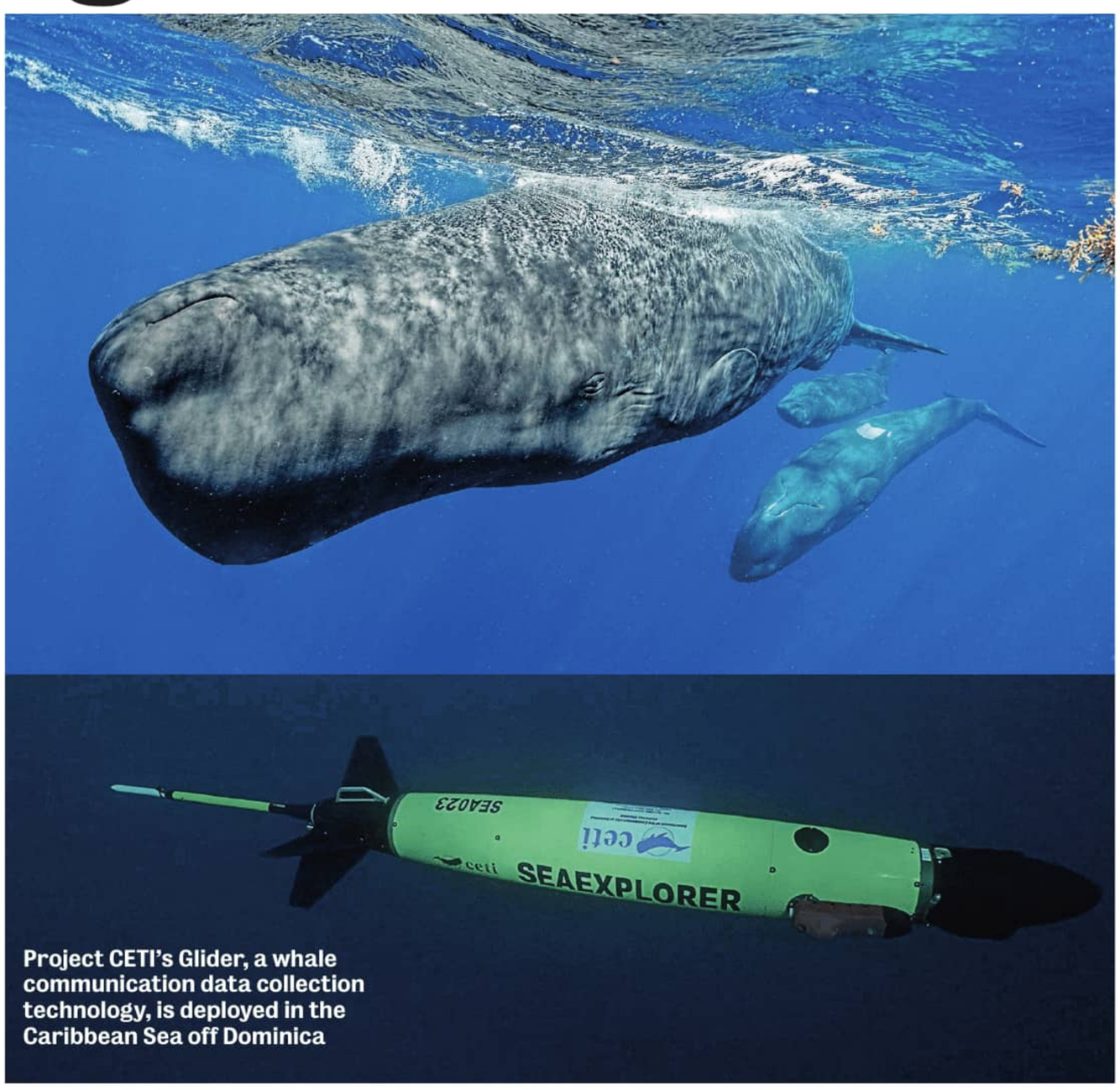
Autonomous glider detects and follows whale vocalisations in real time

Listening in on the whales

Deep beneath the ocean surface, sperm whales swim through the dark waters, clicking to each other in bursts of sound that can travel for kilometres (miles). Now, scientists say they are beginning to follow those exchanges in real time using an autonomous underwater robot that can track whales by listening to their voices.

Sperm whales use clicks to navigate and hunt, and also produce patterned sequences of clicks, known as "codas", that are thought to play a role in communication. Scientists first identified that sperm whales vocalise in 1957. But understanding how they communicate has remained difficult because these marine mammals dive to depths of more than 1.6 km (one mile) for around 50 minutes each hour, making continuous observation challenging.

"The underwater glider is listening for whales via four hydrophones and then steering itself toward them using a feature called backseat driver," said David Gruber, founder and CEO of Project CETI, professor at Baruch College at the City University of New York and a co-author of the study published this week in the journal Scientific Reports. "When the glider detects the vocalisations of sperm whales, the software on board identifies where that sound is coming from and communicates with the glider's navigation system to change directions and follow the whale," he added.



Project CETI's Glider, a whale communication data collection technology, is deployed in the Caribbean Sea off Dominica

What is a glider

A glider is a small robot that slowly changes its buoyancy, becoming slightly heavier to sink and lighter to rise. "You can think of it as a quiet, long-distance explorer, more like a soaring albatross than a motorised vehicle, steadily travelling through the ocean gathering information as it goes," Gruber said. Traditional tracking methods rely on suction tags that fall off after a few days or on stationary sensors that lose contact when whales move on. Project CETI also deploys hydrophones - underwater devices that detect and record sounds - towed from boats.

What makes the new robotic system different, Gruber said, is that it "can make decisions in real time while it's still underwater," rather than recording acoustic data for later analysis. The new approach "continuously updates the glider's path so it can stay with a single whale for extended periods - potentially months," Gruber said. The ability to track whales for longer periods marks what Gruber called a shift "from brief encounters to continuous relationships," allowing scientists to stay with the same whale or group instead of relying on short, opportunistic glimpses and to see patterns in how whales coordinate and respond to their environment.

Such data could also help answer longstanding questions about how sperm whales communicate. "By following mother-calf pairs over time, we can begin to see how calves pick up vocal patterns from their mothers," Gruber said. The system could also reveal how whales react to human activity, allowing researchers to track the way their communication changes in presence of human-made noise and offering a clearer picture of how shipping, offshore construction or fishing affect them.

Yet, precise localisation remains a challenge, as the glider can detect the direction of a whale but not its exact position, limiting its ability to distinguish between individual whales. Communication is another constraint. The robot must surface every few hours to send and receive updates, making long-term, real-world monitoring less seamless. "We're beginning to build systems that can operate independently and respond to the natural world as it unfolds," Gruber said.

Reuters

"When the glider detects the distinctive vocalisations of sperm whales, the software on board identifies where that sound is coming from and automatically communicates with the glider's navigation system to change directions and follow the whale

Tech giants ramp up AI spending, but returns remain uncertain: Jefferies

Global technology companies are set to spend unprecedented sums on artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure, even as concerns mount over weak returns and uncertain business models, according to a latest Greed & Fear report by Jefferies.

The report, titled "The mother of all capex cycles", highlights that AI-related capital expenditure by major US tech players could reach about USD 700 billion this year and USD 800 billion next year, reflecting the scale of the ongoing investment surge.

"This number represents about 2% of US GDP and about 20% of US non-residential fixed investment," the report noted, adding that it is also "equivalent to nearly 30% of total non-financial pre-tax profits of all US companies."

Despite the massive spending, Jefferies flagged rising pressure on cash flows of large technology firms, particularly hyperscalers such as Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet and Meta.

"Capex as a percentage of operating cash flow has risen from 41% in 2023 to a projected 92% in 2026," the report said, underlining how AI investments are increasingly consuming company resources.

The report warned that the sustainability of such high investments remains uncertain, especially given the lack of clear monetisation avenues in AI.

"Rising investment required to maintain leadership... will likely mean 'sustainable profitability is far away for pure model players'," it said, pointing to ongoing challenges in building viable AI business models.

Jefferies added that AI may ultimately resemble a capital-heavy industry rather than a high-margin digital business.

ANI

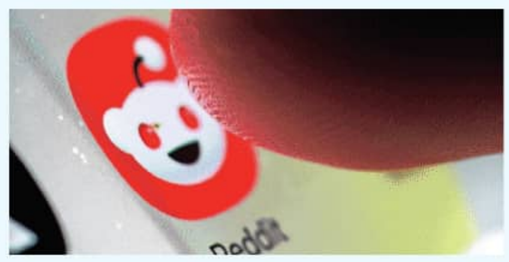
BITS & BYTES

AI BOOST TO US MILITARY

The Pentagon said on Friday it had reached agreements with seven AI companies to deploy their advanced capabilities on the Defense Department's classified networks as it seeks to broaden the range of AI providers working across the military. The statement notably excludes Anthropic, which has been in dispute with the Pentagon over guardrails for the use of its artificial intelligence tools by the military.

The Pentagon labeled the AI startup, which is widely used across the Department of Defense, a supply-chain risk earlier this year. **Reuters**

REDDIT ON A HIGH



Reddit shares jumped 16% in pre-market trading on Friday after an upbeat quarterly revenue forecast underscored growing returns from the social media company's AI-driven advertising tools.

The company's AI-optimised ad platform helps advertisers place targeted ads directly within relevant discussion threads across its interest-based communities called subreddits.

The strong results signal that the company's strategy is paying off as Reddit takes on bigger ad rivals such as Meta's Instagram and Facebook.

Reddit is "still hiring and adding to our talent base," Chief Operating Officer Jen Wong told Reuters on Thursday. **Reuters**

APPLE SPAT INTENSIFIES

Apple has accused India's competition body of exceeding its powers by pushing it to submit its financials in an antitrust case related to the iPhone apps market, while Apple challenges the law governing penalties, documents show. An April 24 non-public Indian court submission by Apple, reviewed by Reuters on Thursday, is the latest sign of a growing confrontation between the company and Indian investigators over a case in which Apple says it could face a penalty of up to $38 billion. The Competition Commission of India has since 2024 sought Apple's financial information after an investigation found it abused its dominant position. **Reuters**

CAUGHT IN A LOOP

How unhealthy ultra-processed foods are designed, marketed to make us crave them

Consumption of ultra-processed foods - including soft drinks, snacks and ready meals - is growing worldwide, despite evidence they are unhealthy.

Ultra-processed foods (UPFs) make up about 70% of packaged food products on supermarket shelves, and even more in convenience stores.

In our new research, we explore how companies that produce these foods play on human nature to make such products seem the easiest, most rewarding and compelling option.

We show that UPFs are designed to make us crave them and eat more. They are marketed to all groups, particularly children, in a way that makes them seem the most delicious and convenient option, giving the best value-for-money, despite many health harms.

Our attraction to UPFs is no coincidence. UPF companies combine a range of tactics to drive up consumption. Many of these tactics exploit the ways we think, feel and behave.

Why do we keep eating UPFs

UPFs are the most processed foods on the market. According to the medical journal The Lancet, they are commercial formulations made from cheap ingredients extracted or derived from whole foods, combined with additives, but mostly containing little to no whole food in the end product.

UPFs are heavily branded and marketed, and most are produced by large international corporations.

But diets high in UPFs carry a risk of developing a wide range of serious health conditions, including excess weight or obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, cancer, chronic kidney disease and depression, as well as premature death.

Our research asked why we keep eating diets high in UPFs when we know how unhealthy they are. To answer this, we decided to zoom out and explore the system that develops, produces and markets UPFs, and investigate how human nature is caught up in it.

We reviewed a decade of published research on the food science and marketing of UPFs, and then worked with experts in these fields to create and refine system diagrams to visualise how it works.

These maps are called "causal loop diagrams", and their power is in showing reinforcing (positive) feedback loops that drive the system towards its ultimate purpose: selling more UPFs.

We found that the system is made up of many interconnected loops that capture parts of human behaviour and biology as key elements.

Products designed for maximum consumption

One feedback loop includes the use of addictive combinations of ingredients, particularly refined carbohydrates and fats. Biologically, carbohydrates (including but not limited to sugars) and fats activate different reward pathways between the gut and brain. When they are consumed together, their effects become addictive.

These ingredients can be combined in many different concentrations to hit sensory "sweet spots". In other words, they maximise pleasure and craving responses while minimising negative responses.

Further strategies include processing methods that suppress people's natural sense of being full or speed up digestion in order to give an immediate but quickly fading sense of "reward", making us want more, sooner.

UPF marketing strategies

In terms of marketing, products are formulated to be easy and convenient to store and eat, and to appeal to our sense of getting good value.

Various promotional techniques aim to capture consumers' attention and desire, as well as give the illusion of healthiness. Strategies targeting children in particular employ popular culture associations with coolness or fun.

Another example of a feedback loop is how corporations collect large and complex data on our purchasing habits and our online lives, informing targeted digital marketing on social media platforms. This tends to be effective at driving purchases, providing more data to further refine these promotion strategies.

Overall, we identified 11 different reinforcing feedback loops. Our research is the first study to show this web as part of the UPF system, designed to essentially trap people into buying and eating more and displacing healthier options in diets.

This product-level system also connects with feedback loops further up the supply chain in economic and financial spheres of the global UPF production.

This matters because unhealthy diets and excess body weight cause 18% of preventable premature death and disability in New Zealand. Both risk factors are linked to eating too much UPF.

What to do about it

Diets high in UPFs are not the result of people's free personal choice or weak willpower, but of an intentionally designed system.

Our research shines light on how the UPF system is taking advantage, particularly of children. International experts have framed UPFs as a major global health issue, and advise strong government policy to regulate these products to counter some of these mechanisms.

Complacency is not an option. The food system needs rebalancing so that it serves and nourishes people now and in the future.

(By Kelly Garton and Boyd Swinburn, University of Auckland, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

Rich nations might eliminate cervical cancer by 2048, progress slow in poor countries: Study

High-income countries are on track to eliminate cervical cancer -- preventable through vaccination and screening -- by 2048, while low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) will see only slight reductions over the next century, according to a study published in The Lancet journal.

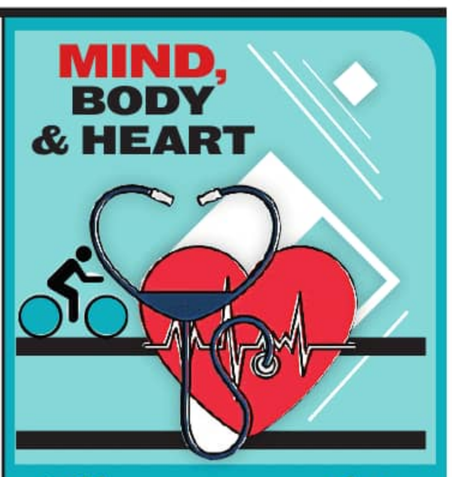
As a result, the gap between regions will widen dramatically, with women in LMICs facing much higher rates of this preventable disease, researchers, including those from CHU de Quebec-Universite Laval Research Center in Canada, said.

Almost all cervical cancer cases (99 per cent) are linked to infection with high-risk human papillomaviruses (HPV), an extremely common virus transmitted through sexual contact, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Cervical cancer is largely preventable through HPV vaccination and regular screening, it says.

The United Nations' health agency has set an elimination target of an incidence rate of under four cases per one lakh women.

Each country should meet '90-70-90' targets by 2030 -- 90 per cent human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine coverage among girls by age 15, 70 per cent of women screened by age 35 and then 45, and 90 per cent of women with pre-cancer and cancer treated -- to be on track to eliminate cervical cancer within the next century, the WHO says. —PTI



All you need to know about...

Bumps on legs

What do they look like?
A. Red spots on the skin are a frequent medical problem. When the patches appear in clusters, they are commonly referred to as rashes.

Causes
The most frequent causes of what seems to be a rash or red spots on the lower legs are immune-mediated inflammation such as eczema or psoriasis, or a skin infection such as cellulitis. Other causes of red spots on the lower legs include allergies to particular foods or contact with harmful plants.

What are tiny red dots on the skin?
Petechiae are little, red, flat patches on your skin. They are the result of bleeding. They can occur in bunches and resemble a rash. Petechiae are small red, purple, or brown patches on your skin that might be cancerous.

Home remedies
1. Aloe Vera Gel
Aloe vera gel is one of the most common and widely used skincare ingredients. Its cooling texture soothes the skin, and it has medicinal properties that can help with the appearance of red spots on your legs.

2. Calamine Lotion
Calamine lotion is a soothing remedy to ease your agony, especially if the red bumps on your legs are itchy.

3. Oatmeal
Oatmeal includes avenanthramides, which are compounds that relieve irritation and inflammation. They help prevent histamines, which are molecules in your body that induce allergic responses. Oatmeal compresses, ointments, and bath treatments are all options.

4. Apple Cider Vinegar
Apple cider vinegar contains acetic acid which has anti-bacterial properties that can help with red spots on your legs. Make sure to dilute the apple cider vinegar before using it on your skin.

—Femina

mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
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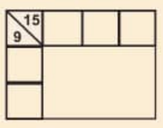
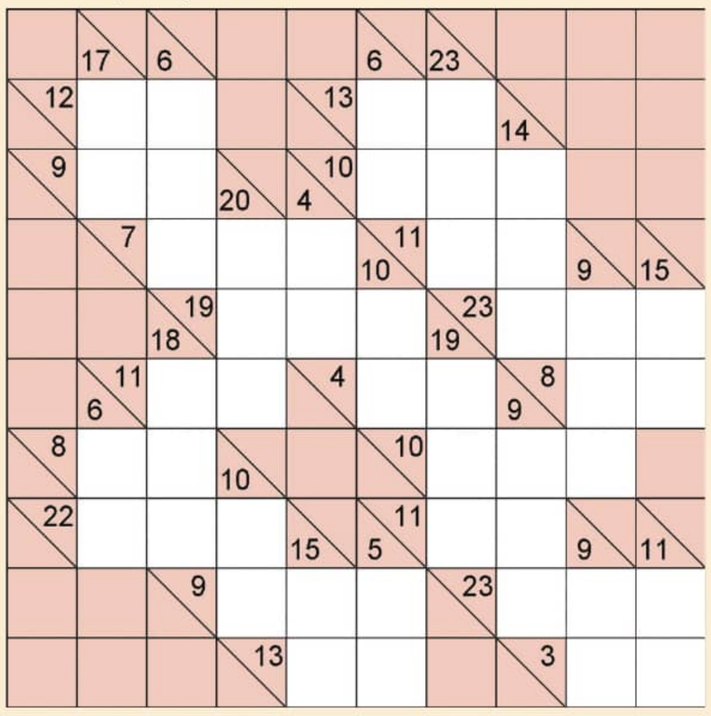
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

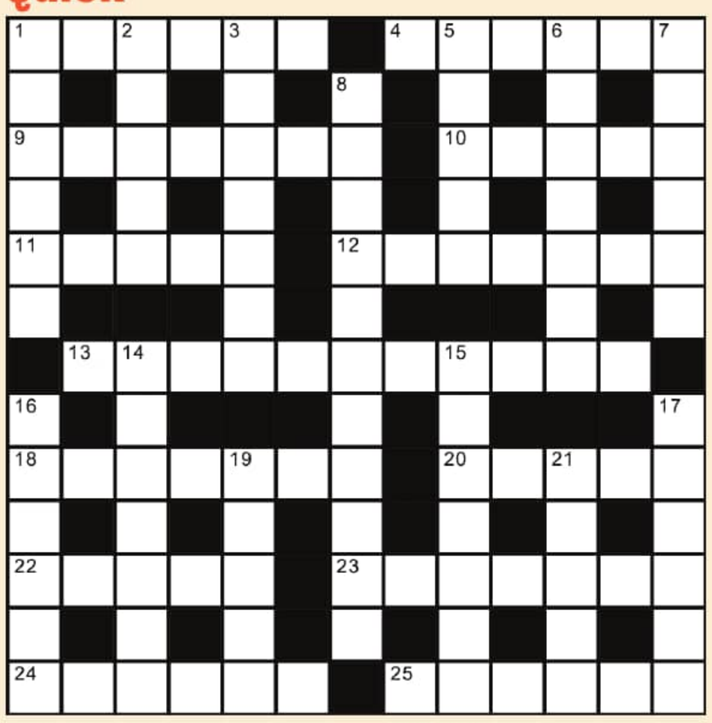
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Sounds like a bird ? (6)
4 Exhausts (4,2)
9 Basutoland today (7)
10 Has to have (5)
11 Pertaining to the kidneys (5)
12 Instalment of e.g. loan (7)
13 International airport locale (11)
18 Head garland (7)
20 Indian dish of cucumber in yoghurt (5)
22 Embed (5)
23 Approaching (7)
24 Neatly (6)
25 Stared fiercely (6)

DOWN

1 Salad plant, in sticks (6)
2 Peer Gynt author (5)
3 Kneecap ? (7)
5 Christmas visitor (5)
6 Design device (7)
7 Didn't fail ? (6)
8 Contradicting, differing or matching (11)
14 Made possible (7)
15 Overseas post (7)
16 Text, of a play say (6)
17 Scrounged or sponged ? (6)
19 Faithful (5)
21 More chilly or colder (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: T EQUALS O

IP MTN AOLJH RTT WNVX RIWL RXIJZIJE KSTNR K RXIJE, MTNÕQQ JLDLG ELR IR HTJL.

Linemaro

iTunes has it all wrong, the hottest single of the year is you

Mindchow

Those who don't want to imitate anything, produce nothing

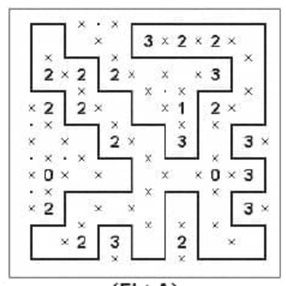
Joke of the day

If banks are good with numbers, why are there always eight windows with three tellers

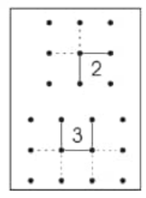
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

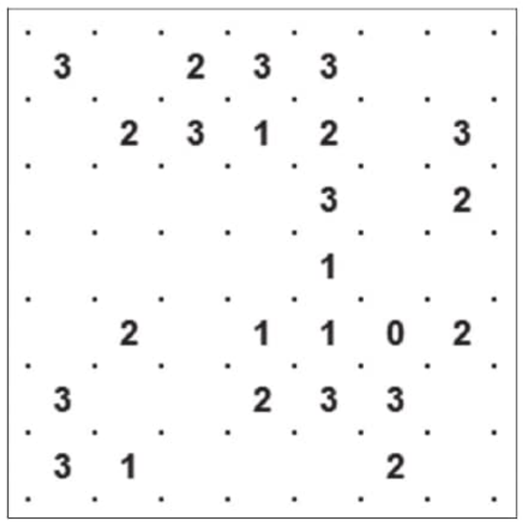


(Fig B) Not Allowed

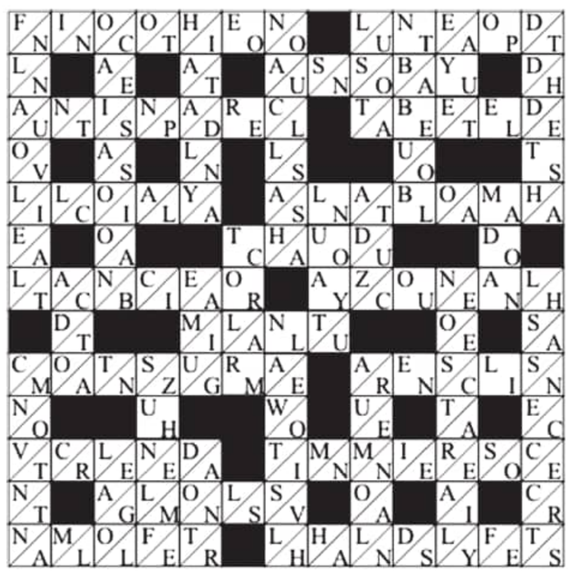
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



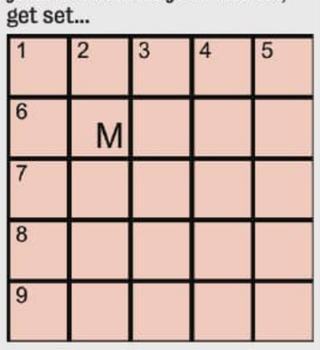
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 See SD; 6 Amain;
7 As CRT; 8 Or Its;
9 Loyal

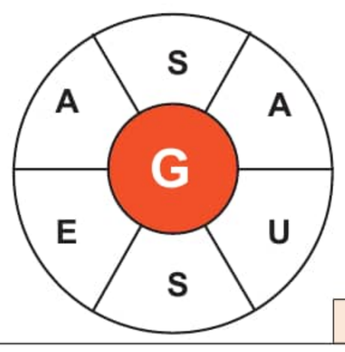
DOWN

1 Arcas; 2 Melia (1-4);
3 Loner; 4 Id Tot;
5 Says S

Mensapuzzle

Which number needs to go in the blank segment?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; **06** Good; **08** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

			7		1		8	
9	7		5			2	6	
	4				2			
1		3					9	7
				8				
5	9					6		1
			9				7	
	5	9			6		2	4
	1		3		7			

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 11

1 4 4 4

Medium = 16

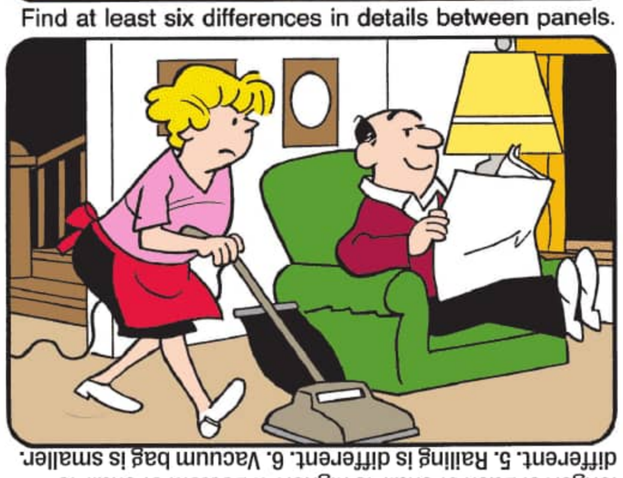
3 5 9 2

Hard = 25

6 7 8 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



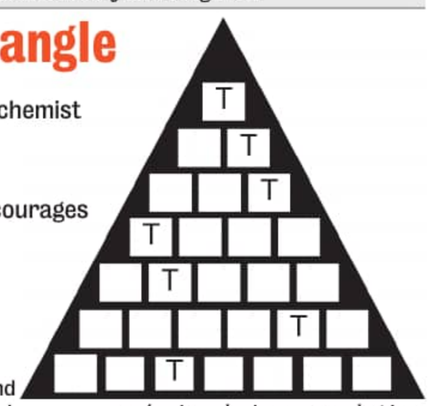
Differences: 1. Man's leg is longer. 2. Woman's hair is longer. 3. Back of chair is higher. 4. Bottom of chair is different. 5. Railing is different. 6. Vacuum bag is smaller.

Riddler

Each pair of definitions is for two words, where the second word is the first word with a letter deleted (example: brand & band). The length of the first word in each pair is provided, along with the position of the deleted letter to obtain the second word. 1) a baked food made from flour (5 letters) & (delete 3rd letter) a thin metal nail with a small indented head 2) of or relating to groups of people with common characteristics and customs (6 letters) & (delete 4th letter) the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation

Alpha triangle

1 Terabyte
2 Astatine for the chemist
3 Gathered dust
4 Prepares a pelt
5 Get on your feet
6 Frightens or discourages
7 Astonish

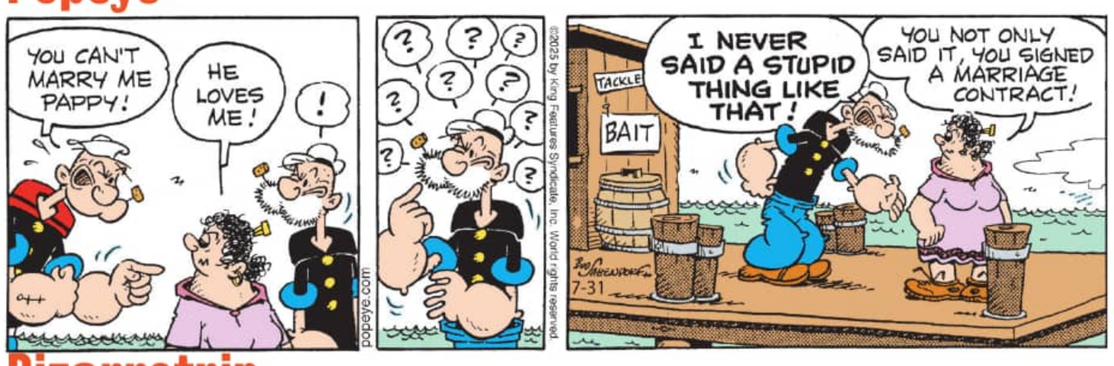


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


YOU CAN'T MARRY ME PAPPY!
HE LOVES ME!
!
popeye.com
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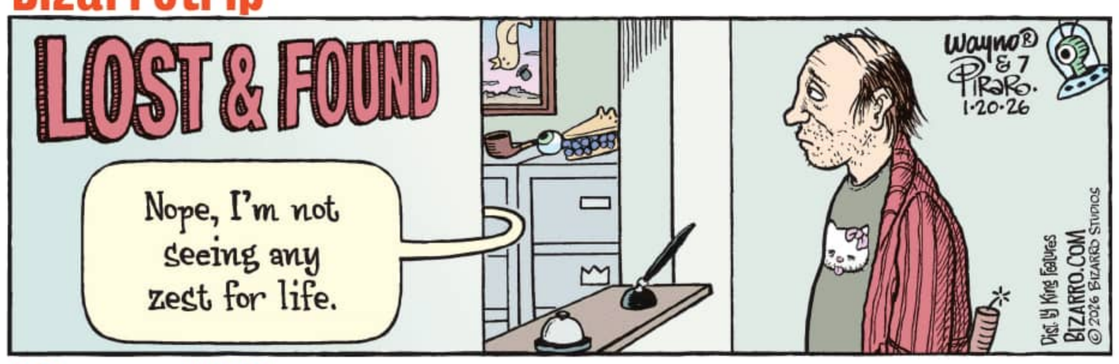
TACKLE
BAIT
I NEVER SAID A STUPID THING LIKE THAT!
YOU NOT ONLY SAID IT, YOU SIGNED A MARRIAGE CONTRACT!
7-31

Bizarrotrip

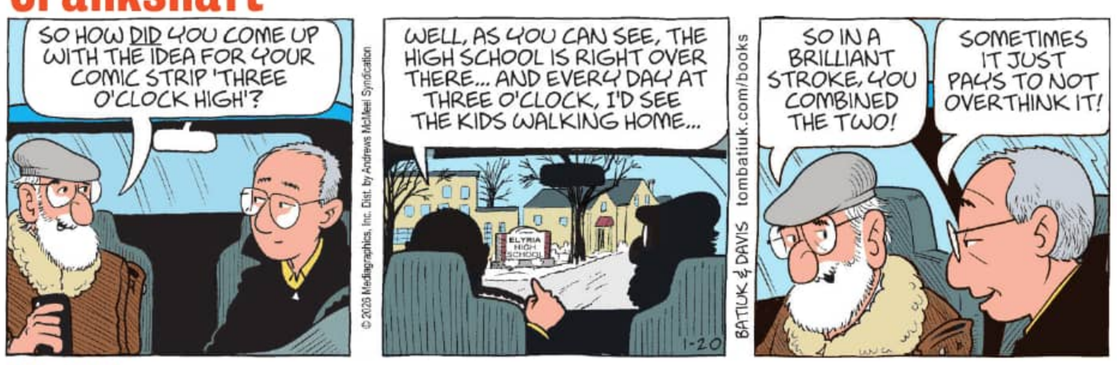


Diamond Lil

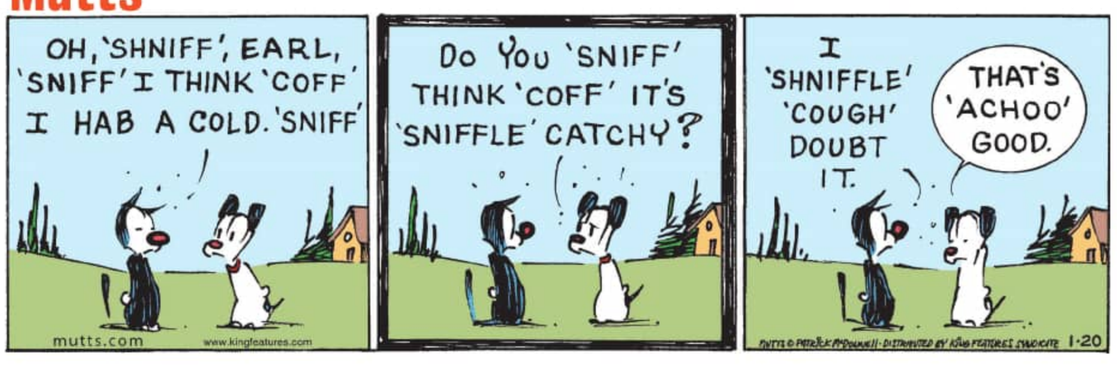
Hart of the city

LAUREN, YOU'LL BE DOING THE THEATER MAKEUP REPLICATION CATEGORY. YOU'LL HAVE TO REPLICATE SOMETHING LIKE THIS!
REFERENCE
IF YOU CAN REPLICATE THAT ON THREE DIFFERENT SKIN TONES, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO HANDLE WHATEVER THEY'LL THROW AT YOU!
WHAT IF I MESS UP?
HEART OF THE CITY © 2026 ANDREWS MCMEEL
THAT'S WHAT THIS EXTRA-LARGE CONTAINER OF THEATER MAKEUP REMOVER IS FOR!
MAKE-UP B GONE
theater grade
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY
1/21

Crankshaft


SO HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE IDEA FOR YOUR COMIC STRIP 'THREE O'CLOCK HIGH'?
WELL, AS YOU CAN SEE, THE HIGH SCHOOL IS RIGHT OVER THERE... AND EVERY DAY AT THREE O'CLOCK, I'D SEE THE KIDS WALKING HOME...
ELYSIA HIGH SCHOOL
© 2023 MediaGraphics, Inc. Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
1-20
SO IN A BRILLIANT STROKE, YOU COMBINED THE TWO!
SOMETIMES IT JUST PAYS TO NOT OVERTHINK IT!

Mutts


OH, 'SHNIFF', EARL, 'SNIFF' I THINK 'COFF' I HAB A COLD. 'SNIFF'
Do You 'SNIFF' THINK 'COFF' IT'S 'SNIFFLE' CATCHY?
I 'SHNIFFLE' 'COUGH' DOUBT IT.
THAT'S 'ACHOO' GOOD.
mutts.com
www.kingfeatures.com
1·20

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

Dr SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Stability is your theme for the next twelve months. You will focus on strengthening your foundations, whether through property investments or deepening family roots. A steady pace serves you better than rushing toward the finish line. Patience reveals a hidden opportunity in your local community. Nurture your physical health by adopting a more consistent, earth-centered routine for lasting vitality.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today sparks romance, creativity, and a deep appreciation for beauty around you. You may feel idealistic about love and connections. Embrace this energy fully, and consider planning a special, meaningful date.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You feel compassionate today, especially toward those in need or someone close requiring support. Your empathy runs deep, encouraging you to help selflessly, understanding others struggles through your own experiences.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today's warm, emotional energy affects your finances, possibly clouding judgment. You may overspend or overvalue opportunities. Be cautious with money matters, as things may not be as beneficial as they appear.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You may feel affectionate toward authority figures or older individuals today, and others may see you as dependable and kind. Still, avoid making major decisions now and focus on maintaining emotional balance.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Your sense of beauty is heightened today, encouraging you to explore inspiring places like galleries, parks, or architecture. You may also feel drawn to meaningful ideas or contributing to something worthwhile.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Romantic, warm, and generous feelings surround you today, making connections feel special. However, this energy influences your finances, so be careful not to overspend or give away more than intended.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
This is a wonderfully romantic and social day for you. Enjoy meaningful connections, affectionate moments, and quality time with loved ones. It's an ideal time to plan a date or special outing.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Work relationships feel harmonious today, encouraging mutual support and cooperation. You may also find joy in helping others, caring for pets, or even experiencing a pleasant, unexpected romantic connection at work.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today may bring a deep emotional or romantic connection, feeling destined or special. However, un-met expectations could cause disappointment. Reflect on whether your hopes were realistic and clearly communicated to others.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
You feel warm and welcoming today, making it a perfect time to host loved ones at home. You may also feel inspired to enhance your space creatively and make it more beautiful.

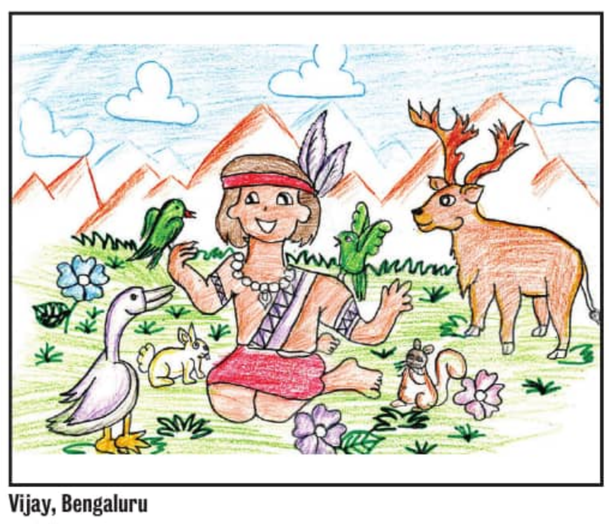
Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today's energy encourages you to slow down and appreciate the beauty in everyday surroundings. Take a moment to truly notice details, as rushing may cause you to miss meaningful experiences around you.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Romance fills the air today, making it perfect for meaningful connections or a special date. However, be mindful of overspending or excessive generosity, and stay grounded when handling financial matters.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE

Ananya, Bengaluru



Vijay, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
[4^(2/3) * 4^(2/3) * 4^(2/3)]^(3/2)]^ (3/2)
{[4^(2/3)]^3 }^(3/2)
(4^2) ^ (3/2)
4^3 = 64

BULL'S EYE
ague, ASSUAGE, gauss, guess, sage, sage, sage, SAUSAGE, usage

RIDDLER
1) bread & brad,
2) ethnic & ethic

FAST FIVE

A	L	L	O	Y
R	I	O	T	S
C	A	R	T	S
A	M	N	I	A
S	E	E	D	S

STRIKE OUT

F	I	C	T	I	O	N	■	U	N	A
I	C	I	L	Y	■	A	L	A	B	A
V	S	■	L	■	L	■	O	■	A	B
U	N	S	N	A	R	L	■	A	B	E
L	E	■	T	■	U	N	S	A	Y	■
A	■	O	■	T	H	U	■	D	■	O
L	A	N	C	E	R	■	A	Z	O	N
■	D	■	M	A	N	U	■	O	■	A
C	O	N	S	U	M	E	■	R	E	S
O	■	H	■	W	■	E	■	T	■	C
T	R	E	E	D	■	I	M	M	E	R
T	■	G	L	O	S	S	■	A	■	I
A	L	O	F	T	■	H	A	N	D	L

QUICK

T	I	D	I	L	Y	■	G	L	A	R
P	■	E	■	A	■	G	■	I	■	E
I	N	L	A	Y	■	N	E	A	R	I
R	■	B	■	O	■	I	■	M	■	C
C	H	A	P	L	E	T	■	R	A	I
S	■	N	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	C
■	D	E	V	A	N	A	H	A	L	L
Y	■	■	■	L	■	R	■	■	■	I
R	E	N	A	L	■	T	R	A	N	C
E	■	E	■	E	■	N	■	T	■	N
L	E	S	O	T	H	O	■	N	E	E
E	B	■	A	■	C	■	A	■	T	■
C	H	I	R	P	S	■	U	S	E	S

MENSA PUZZLE
68. In each circle, divide the difference between the top and right hand numbers by 4 to give the left hand value.

QUOTE UNCODE
If you spend too much time thinking about a thing, you'll never get it done.

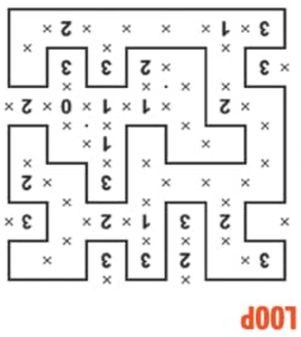
SUDOKU

2	3	6	7	9	1	4	8	5
9	7	1	5	4	8	2	6	3
8	4	5	6	3	2	7	1	9
1	2	3	4	6	5	8	9	7
4	6	7	1	8	9	5	3	2
5	9	8	2	7	3	6	4	1
3	8	2	9	5	4	1	7	6
7	5	9	8	1	6	3	2	4
6	1	4	3	2	7	9	5	8

ALPHA TRIANGLE
T, At, Sat, Tans, Stand, Daunts, Astound.

GO FIGURE
Easy
4 + 4 – 1 + 4 = 11
Medium
9 × 2 + 3 – 5 = 16
Hard
7 × 6 – 9 – 8 = 25

LOOP



KAKURO

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 # Missing prize
Oscar statuette for 'Mr. Nobody Against Putin' goes missing on flight

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Bail's first look out

The makers of Bail unveiled the first look of the film on the eve of the birth anniversary of the legendary Dr. Rajkumar. The film stars Dr. Shiva Rajkumar and is supported by Venkata K Narayana under the banner of KVN Productions

The poster features a silhouette of Dr. Shiva Rajkumar standing under an umbrella in heavy rain, set against a deep red backdrop that hints at tension, drama, and emotional depth.

This project brings together KVN Productions and director Pavan Wadeyar, known for delivering hit films like Govindayamanaha, Googly, Ranavikrama and Natasaarvabhowma Raymo.

Wadeyar said, "This movie is special to both me and the production house. We have got a lot in store for you and will announce the teaser very soon. Working with Shivanna is a dream come true. He has been an icon for decades and to be presenting him in a way that hasn't been done before is something I am very excited about."

Speaking about the collaboration, Venkat Narayan, KVN Productions, said, "Bail is a very special project for us that balances strong storytelling with a distinctive cinematic vision. Collaborating with a proven storyteller like Pavan Wadeyar and working alongside an icon like Shivanna is an absolute honour."

All hurdles cleared

After overcoming many hurdles, debutant director Jagadeesh is all set to release his movie Dhruti on May 8 across the state.

"I am a businessman. I have had a passion for movies since my childhood. My aim was to handle a megaphone for a Kannada movie. Finally, I reached that goal. Initially, I thought I would use a phone to shoot, but my wife and some friends came forward to lend a helping hand. With their help, I engaged a cinematographer. But the cinematographer passed away," said Jagadeesh.

He said he learnt cinematography and completed the shooting of the movie. "Atrocities against women inspired me to write the script for this movie and it explores a solution for this menace. Apart from writing script, dialogues, lyrics, and direction, I also have supported this movie. Prashanth and Anchal are the lead pair. Prasanna Kumar has scored its music, which will be a highlight," he said. Prashanth said that he plays the protagonist in the movie. "I am a choreographer and am also associated with theater. I am very happy to get this chance," said Prashanth. Anchal said she plays Dhruti, a resilient person.

WHO'S WHO AT MET GALA

Strong Indian presence at event over the years; Karan Johar to debut, Ranveer-Deepika surprise this year

The Met Gala 2026 will take place on May 4 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, with several Indian celebrities expected to draw attention on the red carpet. Karan Johar is likely to make his debut, while Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh,

Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Alia Bhatt, Isha Ambani, Natasha Poonawalla and Manish Malhotra are among the Indian names linked to this year's event. The theme is "Costume Art," and the dress code is "Fashion Is Art."

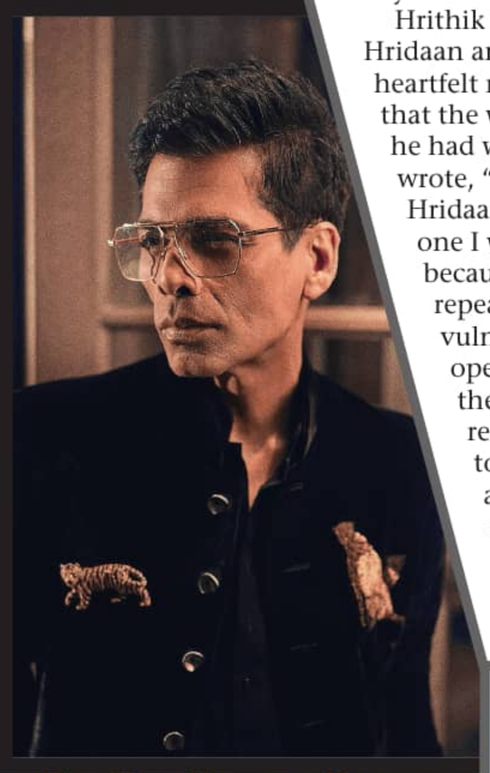
According to India Today, the 2026 guest list has sparked strong interest because of India's growing presence at the global fashion event. Deepika Padukone, a regular Met Gala name, is expected to return with Ranveer Singh.

The couple was recently seen at the airport, which led to fresh talk about their possible appearance.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas also remains a key Indian name at the Met Gala. She made her debut in 2017 and has since appeared in looks ranging from feathered Dior to tailored Balmain suits. Her appearances helped bring more attention to Indian stars at the event. Alia Bhatt is another expected name. Her earlier Met Gala looks included a pearl-heavy Prabal Gurung outfit and a mint Sabyasachi saree with a long train. Both looks highlighted Indian craft, textiles and embroidery on a global stage.

Karan Johar's possible Met Gala debut has added fresh attention to the Indian lineup. Reports suggest he could wear a custom Manish Malhotra look that matches the "Fashion Is Art" dress code. Johar had cheered for Shah Rukh Khan, Diljit Dosanjh, Kiara Advani and Manish Malhotra at the 2025 edition. Shah Rukh Khan and Kiara Advani also made strong impressions last year.

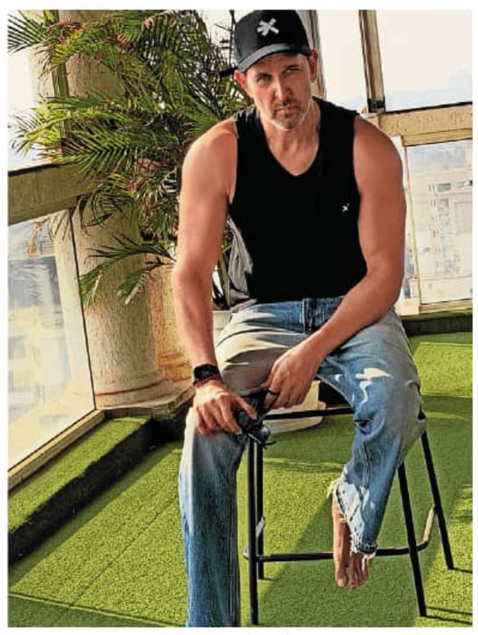
— ETimes



Hrithik turns poet for son's b'day

Hrithik Roshan and Sussanne Khan's son Hridaan Roshan turned 18 on May 1. The milestone marked a special moment for the family. Both parents took to social media to celebrate the occasion with heartfelt messages. They shared rare glimpses of Hridaan. Hrithik shared a picture of Hridaan and accompanied it with a heartfelt note. The actor revealed that the words were part of a poem he had written earlier in 2021. He wrote, "Happy 18th birthday Hridaan I'm no poet, but sharing one I wrote for you in 2021.. because some things are worth repeating. I'm so proud of the vulnerability you wear so openly, but right behind it- there exists a second skin... resilient, unshaken. It's easy to miss. But I've seen it - again and again. You are a raging fire... behind calm eyes. You are a yoddha of a different kind. Not loud, not restless - but steady, aware and deeply strong. A kind so rare it often has me bewildered. A peaceful warrior. This world needs more of them. The world will test you. But I already know how you will meet it. Happy 18th, my son. I love you."

— ETimes



HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME HONOUR TO 2 STARS

The Devil Wears Prada' stars Stanley Tucci and Emily Blunt have been felicitated with Hollywood Walk of Fame stars.

Stanley and Emily were joined by their family members and friends from the industry for the special event. The unveiling of the stars saw Meryl Streep, as well as Emily's former costars Dwayne Johnson and Matt Damon, in attendance.

Both Meryl and Matt delivered speeches for Tucci and Emily. In his speech, Damon, 55, called Tucci, 65, and Blunt, 43, "legends", as per PEOPLE.

"I just can't think of two people more deserving to be added to this cultural landmark, to be giving young artists hope," he said.

Johnson joked that "it's about time" that Blunt and Tucci got stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In his speech, he spoke about Blunt's character and said he admires how humble she is in life. "Every single day, knowing Emily, as many of us do, that is one grateful woman who will wake up feet on the ground, being grateful about every moment," he said.

—ANI